

CHOIR & ORGAN

January/February 2019

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HISTORY BOYS

What issues did Flentrop face when they restored two organs by Hinsz?

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PILGRIM FATHER

Harry Christophers on The Sixteen and their 2019 Choral Pilgrimage



CHOIR & ORGAN OFFERS
Isabelle Demers recital tickets
► see page 27

FREE MUSIC DOWNLOAD
in our New Music section
► see page 39

CHANT DE MAY

John Scott Whiteley unpacks questions surrounding Jongen's famous organ work

UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE

The Music Centre at St Andrews is
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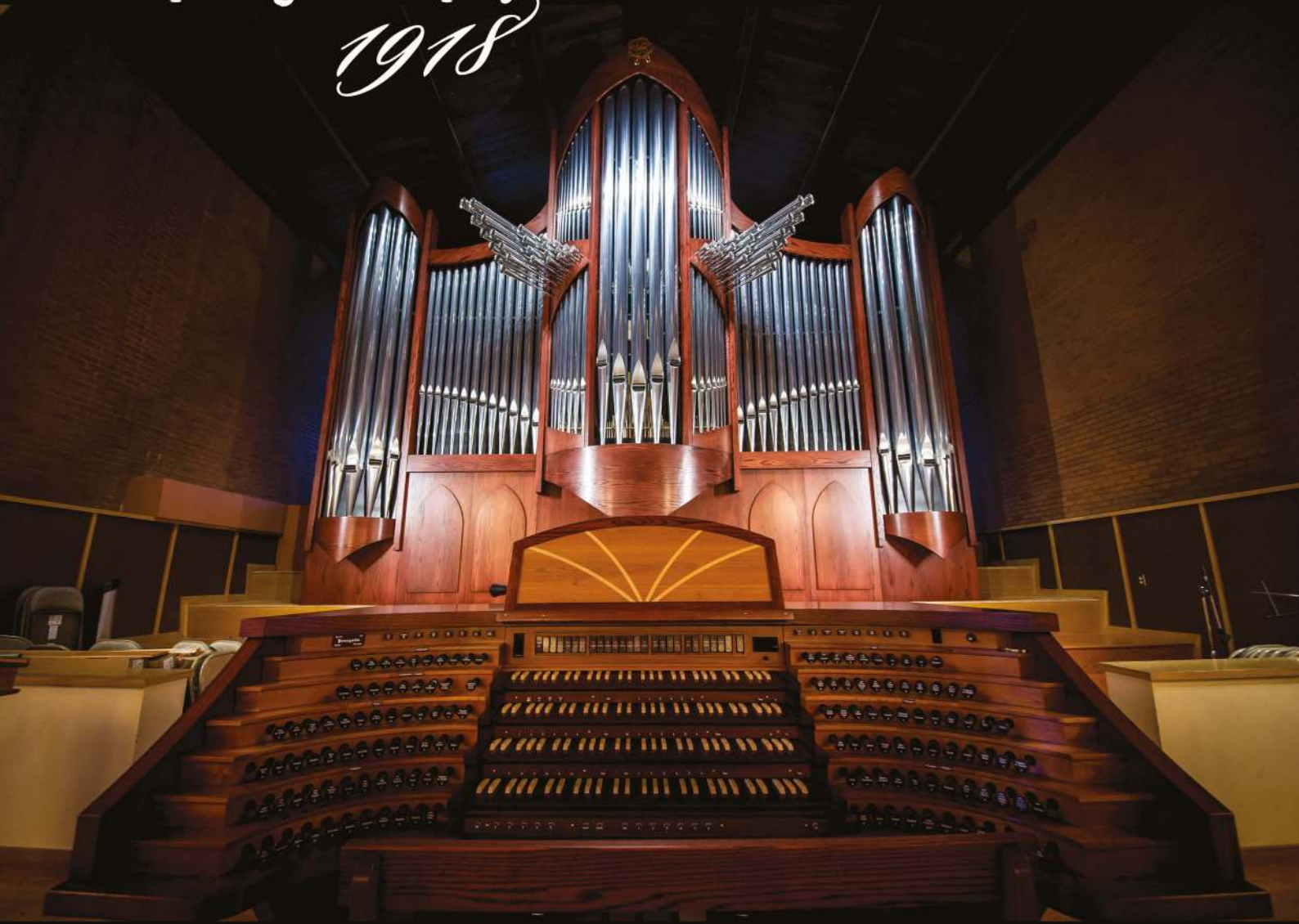


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STAND BY ME



I've never forgotten a comment Olivier Latry once made, that classical music had become a distant planet in the cultural universe, with the organ being a small satellite circulating it. Certainly inviting the average John Doe in the high street to an organ recital is less likely to be met with enthusiastic acceptance than a blank stare and an embarrassed excuse (I know, I've tried it). Even some musical associates who would jump at tickets for a symphony or concerto performance are prone to avoid eye contact and start shuffling their feet at mention of an organ concert.

But those who imagine the organ world to be moribund need to think again. I regularly hear of events to help organists to develop their skills (see News, p.6, and our Summer Schools & Short Courses supplement, p.43); of flourishing organ departments in music colleges (see our feature on the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, p.34); of new instruments being installed, historical ones being restored, and of second-hand instruments being 'recycled'; of initiatives to introduce the organ to young people; and of countless recitals – Recital Round-up (p.75) is only a taster of what is on offer. Thank you to the many of you who keep me abreast of what is happening.

Apart from so much creative energy, I have perceived another reason for the organ world to be thriving: it feels like a family. I can honestly say that in all my time at *Choir & Organ* I can count on the fingers of one hand the number of times I have heard an organist or builder speak slightly of another. Of course this doesn't mean that everyone is in agreement all the time, and like any sector of humanity there will also be personal likes and dislikes; but the sense of mutual support is impressive, and evidenced not least in the number of organists who attend others' recitals – in what other profession does this happen to this extent? So the launch of the Society of Women Organists (see News, p.9) is to be welcomed. Some may instinctively shy away from this venture on the grounds that they are not women, or not organists, or both. But surely any network that encourages a group of creative people, while at the same time opening our own horizons to how others experience life and work, can only strengthen the entire organ community and deserves our wholehearted support.

MAGGIE HAMILTON, EDITOR

SUBSCRIBE TO CHOIR & ORGAN SEE PAGE 78

CHOIR & ORGAN

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An exhilarating recital given by consultant David Titterington on the evening of Monday 12th November marked the culmination of our project to revitalise the organ originally installed in King's College Chapel, London, in 1866. The best of the Father Willis pipework has been combined with new ranks on new soundboards to provide a colourful and versatile instrument for teaching, performing and accompanying the excellent chapel choir. The rebuilt organ now comprises thirty-eight stops on three manuals and pedals, with the unenclosed Choir and Great housed in the projecting gallery and the Swell and Pedal in the chamber behind (which still retains its lead-covered roof from the time when it used to be on the exterior of the building!). The painted facade pipes of the distinctive George Gilbert Scott casework have been beautifully restored, and a new detached console has been provided on a platform which can be moved between strategic locations on the chapel floor. For a full specification, please refer to our website.



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As the renowned vocal ensemble celebrate their 40th anniversary, we trace their development and look ahead to their 2019 Choral Pilgrimage.

COVER PHOTOGRAPH © SIMON JAY PRICE

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'Quality will always out': meet the independent music PR Jo Carpenter.

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NEW DIRECTOR OF MUSIC FOR SAINT THOMAS

BRITT OLSEN ECKER



▲ Extending a legacy: Jeremy Filsell moves to New York

JEREMY FILSELL IS TO BE THE NEXT ORGANIST and director of music at Saint Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, New York; he succeeds Daniel Hyde, who moves to King's College, Cambridge.

Dr Filsell said he was 'honoured, delighted and humbled' to take up the post at Saint Thomas's after Easter 2019. 'It will be a huge

pleasure to succeed Daniel and to try and extend that formidable legacy. With a new organ now in place and the choir school set to celebrate its 100th anniversary next year, there are undoubtedly exciting times ahead.'

In addition, Dr Filsell told *C&O*: 'What seems to be heartening is the growing millennial interest in the numinous and beautiful. Saint Thomas's should be well positioned to provide that, with its history of commissioning and not necessarily being beholden to some of the perhaps more tired core repertoire.'

Saint Thomas's is internationally renowned for its professional choir of men and boys; the Church's music has been steeped in the English choral tradition since T. Tertius Noble founded the Saint Thomas Choir School in 1919.

The Rector, Canon Carl Turner, said: 'I am very excited to welcome Jeremy to join a hard-working team at Saint Thomas Church and to build on the great legacy of his predecessors. Jeremy not only has an international reputation on the organ, but is also passionate about music changing peoples' lives, and I know how much he is looking forward to leading our choir as its unique Choir School celebrates the centenary of its founding.'

In October 2018, the Church celebrated the inauguration of its new Dobson organ, dedicated to the memory of the late John Scott (see *C&O* November/December 2018).

Internationally known as a recitalist on both organ and piano, Dr Filsell is director of music at Saint Alban's Episcopal Church, Washington DC, artist-in-residence at Washington National Cathedral, and professor of organ at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore. His discography comprises more than 35 solo recordings of repertoire from Bach to Rachmaninov. He is on the international roster of Steinway Piano Artists and has recorded for BBC Radio 3, and US and Scandinavian radio networks. He wrote *C&O*'s Stateside column for ten years.

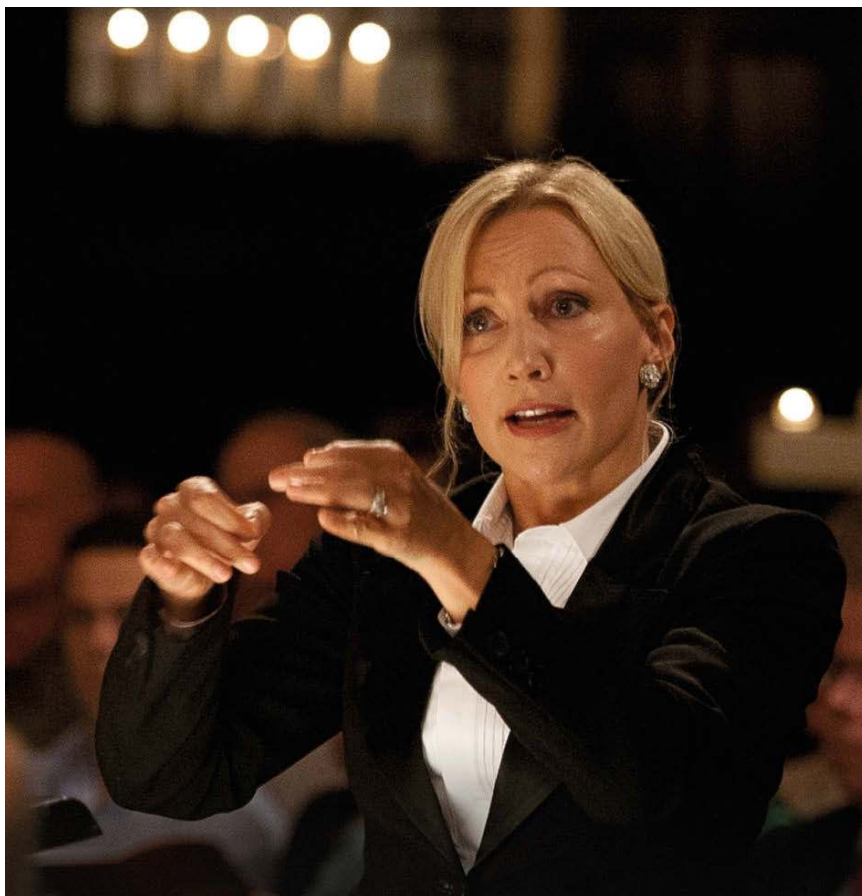
www.jeremyfilsell.com; www.saintthomaschurch.org

Dame Gillian Weir is to lead a masterclass on César Franck's Chorales nos. 2 and 3 at Bloomsbury Organ Day on Saturday 26 January. The event runs from 12.30-7pm, and also includes recitals by Michael Stephens-Jones, Callum Alger, and pupils of the RCO Academy Organ School; a presentation by Philip Norman, 'The One-Man Band'; and an exhibition and buffet. Closing the event is a celebrity recital at 6pm by French-Canadian organist Isabelle Demers, with works by Guillou, Vierne, Berlioz, Barié, Franck and Thalben-Ball (see *Readers' Offers*, p.27). Admission is free from 12.30-6pm; tickets for the closing recital are £7.



NEIL COLLIER

YORKSHIRE IN SONG



▲ Suzi Digby is patron of the new festival, 'Voices Yorkshire'

A NEW CHORAL FESTIVAL is being launched in 2019 by the Yorkshire College of Music and Drama.

With Suzi Digby OBE as patron, 'Voices Yorkshire' takes its inspiration from the historic Leeds Triennial Choral Festival, which ran from 1858 to 1985. The new festival will celebrate the diversity and excellence of choirs across Yorkshire, and states that its aim is 'to boost local communities through the power of music and through a culture of inclusion, support and pride.'

The festival will involve choral performances across the county throughout the year. Its first event – Sing Day Leeds – on 26 January involves a diverse range of Yorkshire choirs performing at venues across the city, from shops and shopping centres, to fire stations, cafés and visitor attractions.

Additional Sing Days are currently being planned for other towns and cities across our region. The 2019 festival will culminate in a grand finale in Leeds Town Hall on 14 September, for which a new piece of music will be commissioned.

Tim Knight, choral director at the Yorkshire College of Music and Drama, said: 'For many years, Leeds was a hugely influential city in the music world. Queen Victoria herself was at the first ever Triennial Music Festival, which celebrated the opening of the Town Hall in 1858. We have hundreds of wonderful choirs across our region and here at the college, and we thought it was time to put Yorkshire back on the choral world stage with an updated version of the old festival.' For more details, and to register your choir's interest, visit www.voicesyorkshire.co.uk.

IN BRIEF

Sing for Pleasure has awarded places on its **Young Conductors' Programme** 2018-19 to Jamie Powe, a recent music graduate from Somerville College, Oxford; Yvette Murphy, who will be taking up an organ scholarship at Selwyn College, Cambridge; Francis St John, an English graduate from Chichester University; Nicolas Walker, a graduate from Homerton College, Cambridge; Amy Kearsley, who is studying for a BMus at the University of Surrey; and Matthew McCullough, who is studying music at Durham University. The recipients will benefit from fully funded training in choral conducting.

New data released in November 2018 shows that lower income families in the UK are being priced out of **music lessons**. The research from the Musicians' Union reveals families with a total household income of less than £28k are half as likely to have a child learning an instrument as more affluent peers with a family income of £48k or more. The disparity exists despite similar levels of interest from both groups of children. Over two-fifths (41%) of those from lower income families say lessons are beyond their household budgets. The educational attainment of parents also plays a factor in whether children will pick up an instrument: nearly half (48%) of children who have parents educated to university level will learn an instrument, compared with one-fifth (21%) at secondary school level.

Naxos has announced its acquisition of the international DVD and Blu-ray label **Opus Arte**. The label focuses on opera, ballet and theatre productions from the Royal Opera House and its key partners, including the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Globe and Glyndebourne. The acquisition includes a catalogue of 600 productions.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS



INSPIRING CHORAL LEADERSHIP

Advanced Course

12 Jan, 9 Feb, 9 & 10 Mar, St Botolph-without-Aldgate Church, London EC3
Led by Peter Broadbent, Sarah Tenant-Flowers and Amy Bebbington; for those operating at a high level of conducting. Observer places available at all sessions.
abcd members £35, non-members £45

Moving forwards – building on basic skills

20 Jan, Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester
Led by Martin Cook; for anyone who has already attended a Basic Conducting Skills days or has been conducting for a while and would like a refresher. Conducting technique, rehearsal and score preparation, gesture vocabulary and communication skills.
abcd members £60, non-members £70

Cambiata North West

20 Jan & 10 Feb, Cheadle Hulme School, Cheshire
Keeping boys singing – workshops and concert for boys in Years 6-13 led by Ian Crawford. Contact Andy Brooke, cambiatanw@gmail.com

Singing Day with Bob Chilcott

9 Mar, The Kings School, Chester
Repertoire includes *Five Days that changed the World*, *Like a Singing Bird* and *Evening Hymn*. **abcd** members £12, non-members £20, students £10. Group booking also available.

Foundation/Leading the Singing Conducting Courses

Apr-Jul (4 one day sessions), London

Emerging/Progressive Conducting Courses

Apr-Oct (7 sessions), London

www.abcd.org.uk/events/abcd-events

BUDDING TALENT



▲ Voices for today: NYCGB's eight new Fellows

THE NATIONAL YOUTH CHOIRS OF GREAT BRITAIN (NYCGB) has announced it has selected eight young musicians to join the fourth edition of its Fellowship Programme, and four young composers selected to join the first edition of its new Young Composers scheme, which is run in partnership with NMC Recordings.

The eight Fellows are sopranos Ailsa Campbell, Gabriella Noble, and Danni O'Neill, alto Clare Sutherland, tenors Jack Harberd and Ben Munden, and baritones George Cook and Sam Gilliat. The singers will lead the sections in the 2018-19 National Youth Choir, gain work experience on NYCGB's outreach programme and junior choir courses, and perform as an octet, including a studio recording session.

Benefits of the new Young Composers scheme include individual mentoring from Ben Parry, Benji Merrison and Anna Meredith, performances and recordings of the composers' works, creative retreats at Aldeburgh, and general career development. The composers selected are Harry Baker, Lillie Harris, Shruthi Rajasekar, and Joanna Ward.

NYCGB artistic director Ben Parry said: 'The Young Composers scheme brings together four young writers from a wide range of backgrounds and styles, who will work with the choirs over the year to create unique and imaginative new music for singers. [On] the fourth incarnation of our Fellowship Programme, eight exceptional young musicians will learn to lead, perform and educate at the heart of our organisation. The auditions for both schemes have been impressive and revealed a wealth of brilliant talent. I am so looking forward to collaborating with all our new recruits, and to discovering how they progress as musicians.' www.nycgb.org.uk

SOCIETY OF WOMEN ORGANISTS LAUNCHES

A NEW SOCIETY TO PROMOTE FEMALE ORGANISTS is to be launched in February.

The Society of Women Organists sets out three key aims:

- To support all women organists
- To encourage girls and women to study the organ
- To foster the promotion of women's activities in the organ world

The initiative comes against a backcloth in which playing the organ – and particularly holding a professional post as an organist – is predominantly a male activity, despite progress that has been made in recent decades. The Society's co-founder Anne Marsden Thomas told *C&O*: 'We were concerned about the gender imbalance in the organ world and the fact that it doesn't seem to be improving by very much, despite the introduction of girls' choirs in the early 1990s, a much easier world to move around in, and the promotion of women in other fields. In the public school system, boys have the opportunity to take lessons and practise in school, but there are fewer public schools for girls and a lot of them don't have organs. Also, young girls are often very, very good on the organ, but I've observed them being pushed forward towards an academic career; or sometimes they simply don't have the confidence to develop their ambitions as organists, so fall

by the wayside.' A recent study by Sarah MacDonald, director of music at Selwyn College, Cambridge, found that only 22 per cent of Oxbridge organ scholars are female.

The Society seeks to realise its aims through a number of ways, key among them being its website, which will include: profiles of women organists, designed to inspire and serve as role models; a list of women who are available for concerts and church works, accompanying, and choral conducting etc; and the chance for women to network among themselves. There will also be occasional events. Marsden Thomas stresses, however: 'We are not into positive discrimination or tokenism; we're not complaining about discrimination; and we're not all women – although there has been an immense amount of interest from women organists of all ages, we have an increasing number of men joining us, too.'

'Our action points for 2019 are: through the website, supervising information about women organists, church musicians, accompanists, conductors; publicising events in which our members take a leading role; offering spotlights on prominent women organists and role models and those approaching the profession; promoting events for women organists to meet and support each other; and actively encouraging, and where possible helping to arrange funding for, lessons for girl organists in schools.



COURTESY ANNE MARSDEN THOMAS

▲ Aine Kennedy, 2nd-year organ scholar at Keble College, Oxford

The public launch of the Society of Women Organists will be at an organ recital given by Catherine Ennis on 25 February at the Royal Festival Hall, London, preceded by a panel discussion with Southbank Centre director of music Gillian Moore, Ennis, Marsden Thomas, and the Society's co-chair Ghislaine Reece-Trapp. The Society's website will be launched in January: www.societyofwomenorganists.co.uk. Those interested in joining may do so online or by email to societyofwomenorganists@gmail.com.

APPOINTMENTS & AWARDS

Julia Selina Blank, from Germany, has won the inaugural London International Choral Conducting Competition (see p.73).

The Royal Northern College of Music has appointed **David Hill** as international chair in choral conducting.

Sara Mohr-Pietsch is to be the next artistic director of the Dartington International Summer School and Festival.

Ben Cooper has been appointed as a new director of the Three Choirs Festival, to chair the Worcester city committee.

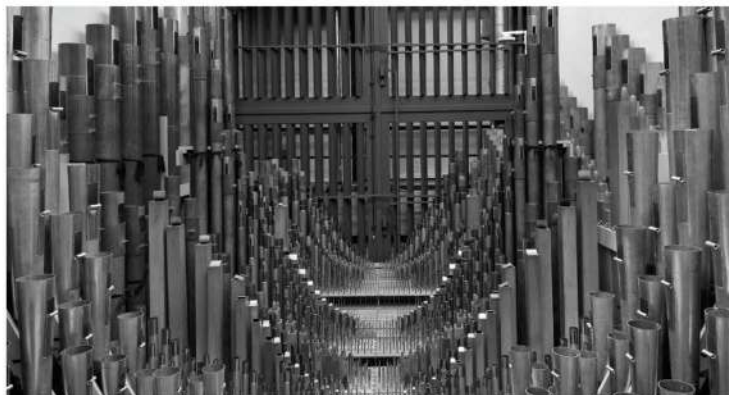
The Monteverdi Choir and Orchestras have appointed **Dinis Sousa** as their first assistant conductor.

At the 2018 British Composer Awards, **Judith Weir** won the Choral category with *In the Land of Uz*, for narrator, solo tenor, chorus and instrumental ensemble; **Emily Peasgood** won the Sonic Art award with her 'choral piece' *Halfway to Heaven*; and **Sally Beamish** was presented with the British Composer Award for Inspiration.

Ely Cathedral has appointed **Edmund Aldhouse** as director of music, to succeed Paul Trepte, who retires at Easter 2019.

Samuel Hudson is to leave Blackburn Cathedral to become organist and director of music at Worcester Cathedral.

Ruth Sellars has won the Sir David Willcocks Carol Competition with *The snow lies thick*.



Pedals and Petals

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SOUTHAMPTON TO SUFFOLK



▲ The Collins organ case and console on temporary display in Orford Church

THE PETER COLLINS ORGAN BUILT in 1977 for the Turner Sims Concert Hall in Southampton is to have a new lease of life at Orford Church in Suffolk, writes *Lindsay Thomson*.

Collins's III/28 *Werkprinzip* organ – on which many BBC recordings were made in the 1970s and 80s by the likes of John Scott, David Sanger and Catherine Ennis – was removed from the Hall to counter the threat of flood damage from an underground river, and remained in storage for several years.

Following a change of use at the Hall, which needed more space to house a symphony orchestra, Southampton University sought to dispose of the organ and found a willing recipient in St Bartholomew's, Orford – the venue for the world premieres of Britten's *Three Church Parables* and *Noyes Fludde*, and a frequent recording location for Chandos, DG Archiv and Hyperion Records.

'Orford lost its original 18th-century west gallery organ when the tower collapsed in the 19th century,' an Orford spokesman told *C&O*. 'Over a hundred years ago it was replaced – temporarily, it was assumed – by a generic six-stop organ thought to be by Bishop's. It's hard to make music on it, and it can't be used for concerts or recordings.' Orford Parish Church Council had been looking for a pipe organ solution for well over a decade but found nothing suitable on the second-hand market; and a new build would be prohibitively expensive: 'So the gift from Southampton University was a godsend in every sense.'

Following an 18-month hiatus involving a petition to the St Edmundsbury Diocesan Consistory Court to secure the necessary Faculty, the Collins organ will now take its place in an underused part of the Grade 1 listed medieval church's north aisle.

The project has been entrusted to independent consultant Paul Hale and the Leicestershire firm of Cousans Organs Ltd, which had taken on craftsmen familiar with the instrument from the wound-up Collins company.

'We're currently fundraising for the £120,000 cost of completely restoring and installing the organ,' the spokesman added. 'As well as supporting the liturgy and creating new concert opportunities for ourselves and outside promoters, for the first time we'll have an instrument for involving young people through teaching. We see this as a community project which will guarantee the continuation of first-class music-making in the church for decades to come.'

The Collins organ is scheduled to be dedicated on Easter Sunday 2019, with an inaugural organ festival to follow in May. www.orfordorganproject.com

BRINGING A MASS TO LIGHT



A RARELY PERFORMED MASS is to be the subject of a choral workshop hosted by the Valentine Singers.

Baroque composer and J.S. Bach contemporary Jan Dismas Zelenka is best known for his sacred choral works, which include over 20 Masses, two Requiems, three oratorios, Magnificat and Te Deum settings, and multiple settings of litanies, psalms, hymns and antiphons. He wrote his *Missa Divi Xaverii* for the feast of St Xavier.

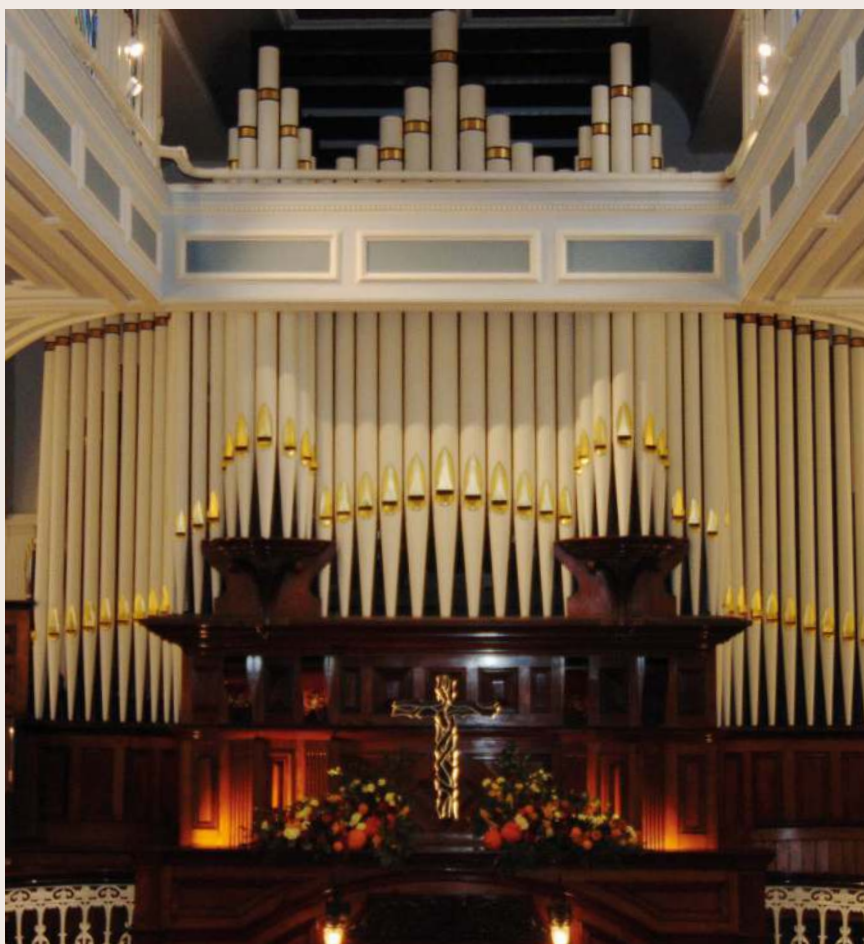
Despite being held in great esteem as a composer during his lifetime, it is only in recent decades that efforts have been made to produce performing editions of Zelenka's choral works; the *Missa Divi Xaverii* was only published in 2016, and the Valentine Singers believe that their performance on 6 April 2019 will be the UK premiere of this work.

The workshop is open to anyone who enjoys choral singing, and will take place on 19 January at St Mary's Church, Woodford (E18 2PA): admission is £26/£10 concessions. www.valentinesingers.org

◀ Zelenka memorial in the Old Catholic Cemetery in Dresden

The Welsh Church of Central London held a gala concert on 6 October 2018 to celebrate the restoration by Nicholson & Co. of its three-manual and pedal organ. Adviser Paul Joslin told C&O, 'The organ was built in the workshop of Alfred Hunter & Son of Clapham in 1908, under the supervision of son Robert Hunter. The organ remained with minor alterations until January 2018 ... [Following the restoration] all the pipes are exactly the same, and with the exception of the pedal Sub Bass, which has been slightly moved, the layout is still 1908. One set of pipes, the pedal Trombone 16ft [a 1901 Walker stop from the Royal College of Music Concert Hall], has been added; the bellows have been restored throughout, and the mechanism between console pipes and control system is 21st-century.'

The organ dedication and gala concert was given by international Welsh organist Jane Watts, who performed a programme of works by Widor, Sibelius (*Finlandia*, together with A5 Brass and Cór Llundain), Parry, Ernest Macmillan, William Lloyd Webber, Richard Poplewell, and T.J. Morgan.



JUST VOICES



▲ Celebrating vocal talent: festival co-hosts The Swingles

THE LONDON A CAPPELLA FESTIVAL celebrates its 10th anniversary on 23–26 January.

Since its launch in 2019, the annual festival has showcased a cappella music in all its diversity, with performers ranging from The Tallis Scholars and the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir to the Beatbox Collective, Anuna, and The Swingles, who co-curate the event together with Ikon Arts Management. The event attracts some 4,500 visitors each year, for concerts and for workshops on aspects of singing unaccompanied.

A joint statement from Ikon Arts Management and The Swingles said: 'We're delighted to be celebrating the London A Cappella Festival's 10th anniversary. Each festival is a really special celebration of vocal talent, bringing performers and music lovers together from across the globe, and we're honoured to be able to programme international stars and also give a platform to amateur and local groups – highlighting the festival's community ethos. We're looking forward to seeing what the next 10 years will bring!'

Performers at the 2019 festival include the internationally acclaimed composer

and singer Laura Mvula with the female vocal quintet Black Voices (23 Jan); central European vocalists The Mystery of the Bulgarian Voices (24 Jan); the all-male Vocal Sampling, known for their adaptations of Cuban salsa (25 Jan); three UK university a cappella groups – The Techtonics, The Rolling Tones and The Bristol Suspensions (25 Jan); American pop-jazz vocal ensemble m-pact (26 Jan); barbershop group The Cottontown Chorus pairing with London City Singers (26 Jan); and festival co-hosts The Swingles (26 Jan).

The closing day of the festival also includes workshops (10am, Switch up your Singing with The Swingles; 11.30am, Get into the Groove with m-pact; 3.30pm, Singing for Health with Phoebe Cave; and 5pm, Singing in the Black Tradition with Black Voices); and LACF Kids, with performances and workshops specifically designed for children, in partnership with the London Youth Choir.

All events are at Kings Place, except The Swingles' concert, which is at 8.30pm on 26 January at LSO St Luke's.

Tickets and full details of all the festival's events are available online: www.londonacappellafestival.com.

EVENTS

Sing for Pleasure is holding a **Midlands Community Choir Showcase** on 6 Apr at Rugby School in Warwickshire. Non-auditioned choirs from all over the UK are invited to participate. The event offers a 10-minute slot for each choir to perform its chosen programme; expert advice on how to enhance performance; new repertoire ideas; and a massed sing. Cost: £15 per person. www.singforpleasure.org.uk

In addition to the short courses listed in our supplement (see p.43), the Royal College of Organists has announced a series of half and full-day classes, including: Perfect your **Pedal Repertoire** with Kevin Bowyer (16 Jan and 24 Apr, Glasgow); Explore Music for **Lent and Easter** with two new OUP anthologies for manuals-only and manuals-with-pedals for early-stage to intermediate players (19 Jan, Grantham); **Choir Directing** with David Hill (2 Feb, Grantham); **Masterclass** with Daniel Cook (below) (12 Feb, St Andrews); and, in venues across London, **Sweelinck** (9 Feb), **Hymn Accompaniment** (16 Feb and 1 Jul), **Harpichord Technique for Organists** (23 Feb), and **Pedal Technique** (11 May). www.rco.org.uk/events.php



GLASS HOUSE

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A NEW ORGAN SYMPHONY BY PHILIP GLASS will receive its world premiere on 10 January at Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles.

Symphony no.12, 'Lodger', is the third work by Glass to reimagine the music of pop legend David Bowie, who died in 2016; the other two works were Glass's Symphonies nos. 1, 'Low', and 4, 'Heroes'.

Organist James McVinnie (left) told C&O: 'The LA Phil tend to commission one large scale work each year for organ and orchestra and I was thrilled when I heard they had chosen Philip Glass – one of my musical idols – to write an "Organ Symphony" for their centennial season this January. The work then developed into being the third and final instalment in his trilogy of symphonies after the music of David Bowie, involving me as organist with singer Angélique Kidjo, together with the LA Phil under the baton of John Adams.'

The performance will be repeated on 11 and 13 January, and its UK premiere will be on 9 May in the Royal Festival Hall, London.

PREMIERES [RP = REGIONAL PREMIERE]

David T. Little: Am I Born (rev. version)

Choir of Trinity Wall Street, NOVUS NY/Wachner
8 Jan, St Paul's Chapel of Trinity Church, Wall Street, New York, US

Philip Glass: Symphony no.12, 'Lodger'

James McVinnie (org), LA Phil/Adams
11 Jan, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, US

Michael Gordon: A Western

Theatre of Voices/Hillier
13 Jan, Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg, DE

José M. Sánchez-Verdú: LAR II

Winner of the Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy Conservatory Competition (org),
Konzerthausorchester Berlin/Niemeyer
20 Jan, Konzerthaus Berlin, Berlin, DE

Karl Jenkins: Symphonic Adiemus [RP]

Distinguished Concerts Singers International & Orch/Griffith
21 Jan, Carnegie Hall, New York, US

Alexander Levine: I am All Alone on the Road

King's Singers
22 Jan, Moscow International Performing Arts Center, Moscow, RU

Marco Galvani: The Darkling Thrush

Sansara
27 Jan, Pusey House Chapel, Oxford, UK

Barnaby Martin: I saw eternity

Londinium/Griffiths
2 Feb, St James, Sussex Gardens, London W2, UK

Paul Smith: Dunelm Lux Aeterna

VOCES8, choirs from local schools/Smith
7 Feb, Durham Cathedral, UK

Peter Eötvös: Multiversum for organ, hammond organ and orch [RP]

Philharmonia Orchestra/Eötvös
7 Feb, Royal Festival Hall, London, UK

Gavin Bryars: Requiem

National Opera and Ballet Amsterdam, Netherlands, Het Balletorkest/Rowe
9 Feb, Dutch National Ballet, Amsterdam, NL

James Burton: St Cuthbert and the Otters

Youth choirs from the North of England /Burton
9 Feb, Durham Cathedral, UK

Alec Roth: A Time to be Born and a Time to Die

Ex Cathedra/Skidmore
9 Feb, Bramall Concert Hall, Birmingham, UK

Howard Goodall: Invictus – A Passion [RP]

Bray Choral Society & Wicklow Choral Society/Kelly
9 Feb, St Andrew's, Dublin, IE
10 Feb, Holy Redeemer Church, Bray, IE

Alexander L'Estrange: The Prophet

St Albans Chamber Choir/Gibbons
16 Feb, St Saviour's, St Albans, Herts, UK

Eric Whitacre: The Sacred Veil

Los Angeles Master Chorale/Whitacre
16 & 17 Feb, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, CA, US

Seóirse Bodley: Love After Chagall

Saint Louis Chamber Chorus/Barnes
17 Feb, Ladue Chapel, St Louis, MO, US

David Loxley-Blount: L'esprit magique [RP]

Martin Kasperek & Joshua Brodbeck (org)
17 Feb, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Columbus, OH, US

Toby Young: Second Book of Madrigals

Scola Cantorum of Oxford/Grahl
18 Feb, Oxford (venue tbc), UK

Judith Weir: In the Land of Uz [RP]

Yale Schola Cantorum
23 Feb, Christ Church, New Haven, CT, US

Fredrik Sixten: Seek Him

Cappella SF/Bohlin
23 Feb, First Congregational Church, Berkeley, CA, US

Peteris Vasks: Bibel / Veni Domine

Valsts Akadēmiskais koris 'Latvija', Iveta Apkalna (org)/Sirmais
24 Feb, Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg, DE

Sam Jackson: Now My Eyes Will Be Open

St Salvador's Chapel Choir/Innes-Hopkins
24 Feb, St Salvador's Chapel, St Andrews, UK

Erkki-Sven Tüür: Psalmody [RP]

Utah Chamber Artists/Bradford
25 Feb, Libby Gardner Concert Hall, Salt Lake City, UT, US

Please send items for News and Letters to the Editor for publication in the March/April 2019 issue to arrive by Friday 18 January: choirandorgan@rhinegold.co.uk; The Editor, Choir & Organ, 20 Rugby Street, London WC1N 3QZ

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Photo by Ben Schreckengost

CHRIST THE KING CHAPEL
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3 manuals, 25 ranks, 2018

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Raising the bar

Forty years ago, a new singing ensemble was launched that would set new standards of virtuosity and musicianship. Concerts, recordings and broadcasts have brought The Sixteen international renown, and since 2000 their annual Choral Pilgrimage has presented renaissance and contemporary repertoire in venues around Britain. Founder-director Harry Christophers talks to **Clare Stevens**

‘It is not difficult to see why Fayrfax’s music was still being copied into new manuscripts long after that of his contemporaries had been consigned to oblivion,’ wrote musicologist and singer Sally Dunkley, a founder member of The Sixteen, in the sleeve notes for the choir’s first

ever recording, of Robert Fayrfax’s *Missa Albanus* and his five-part votive antiphon *Aeternae laudis lilium*. Born in Lincolnshire in 1476, Fayrfax was a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, was the first person to receive a doctorate in music from Oxford University, and is thought to have been connected



◀ Forty years on:
The Sixteen today,
with founder-conductor
Harry Christophers
(third from left)

to performing renaissance polyphony. As a boy chorister at Canterbury Cathedral under Allan Wicks, he had performed a varied repertoire. 'Allan didn't really understand renaissance and baroque music, but he had a fantastic manner with it,' he recalls. However, it was the inspirational work of David Wulstan at Magdalen that set Christophers and his fellow singers Sally Dunkley and Francis Steele – who have edited so many of the modern editions of Tudor music performed by The Sixteen – on their formative paths.

With his Clerkes of Oxenford, Wulstan had begun to introduce composers such as John Sheppard, a 16th-century Informator Choristarum (i.e. director of music) of Magdalen, to a public audience, reconstructing incomplete part books to enable Sheppard's music to be published. Wulstan's research into the performing pitch of 16th-century polyphony

'Pitch in the renaissance was much more flexible than 20th-century scholars thought'

led him to transpose it up by a minor third, resulting in a very high range for the top trebles. 'Women were added to the original men's voices of the Clerkes to sing these parts,' wrote Dunkley in a *Guardian* obituary when Wulstan died in 2017, 'and David directed inspirational performances, characterised by a straight sound that eschewed vibrato, natural phrasing that made sense of the music's trajectory, and a powerful momentum.'

'We now know that much of this research was wrong,' says Christophers, 'but at the time it was revolutionary and we fell under David's spell. The ethereal sound created by the high pitch gave the music an extra intensity. David believed that the younger boys in the 16th and 17th centuries would have sung the top parts with older boys providing the mean, which these days would be sung by counter-tenors.' Opinions have changed over the past decades, however, and scholars of today such as David Skinner and John Milsom have deduced that pitch in renaissance times was often dictated by organ tuning, and was a much more flexible concept than the pioneers of the 20th-century early music movement thought. 'John Milsom is my bible on these matters,' says Christophers. 'He thinks the composers of the Tudor period were practical musicians and would have performed their choral works at any pitch that suited the forces available. The Sixteen is not an "authentic" group, and we are now adopting a similar approach.'

In 1989 the Meridian label released The Sixteen's first CD of works from the Eton Choirbook, which ▶

to St Alban's Abbey – hence the eponymous Mass setting. His presence is recorded at state occasions such as the coronation of Henry VIII in 1509 and the famous meeting of the kings of England and France at the Field of the Cloth of Gold. He was clearly one of the leading musicians of his day; his style was less elaborate than that of, for example, John Browne or William Cornysh, wrote Dunkley, but it was highly original and progressive in its handling of the distinctive vocal colours of each part.

Aeternae laudis lilium provides a perfect demonstration of that style, and is one of the seminal works from four decades of performances and recordings that director Harry Christophers has chosen to revisit on The Sixteen's Choral Pilgrimage in this year's 40th anniversary season. Looking back on the origins of the ensemble that gave its first concert in August 1979, Christophers reflects that it is strange to think that when he went up to Magdalen College, Oxford, as an undergraduate choral scholar his favourite composer was Mahler, yet he emerged to found a choir dedicated initially

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won a Gramophone Award; four more volumes were to follow. Christophers is touched that listeners still seem to have a fondness for these recordings: 'When we performed in York not long ago, a first-year student came up afterwards with a boxed set which he said he listens to all the time, and we had similar responses to a concert earlier this year.'

It has evidently been hard to choose just a few pieces from this much-loved repertoire for the anniversary pilgrimage, but one essential ingredient of the programme is the nine-part *Salve regina* by Robert Wylykynson, the only composer included in the Choirbook who is definitely known to have had a position at Eton. He is believed to have been admitted as a King's Scholar in 1494, and is recorded as parish clerk 1496-98, lay clerk 1499-1500 and 'Instructor' 1500-15, when he left for unknown reasons; he is assumed to have died not long after. '*Salve regina* is clearly written in Wylykynson's own hand – it's not quite as elegant as some, but in the illuminations the composer is represented by a whelk in the sun, and the nine part names are depicted by the hierarchy of angels [Seraphs, Cherubs, Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels and Angels] – they are really beautiful.' The programme begins with a plainsong *Salve regina* and includes the Gloria and Agnus Dei from Sheppard's sumptuous six-part *Cantate Mass*.

Alongside 16th-century works, Christophers has selected five contemporary pieces for the tour. They



include John Tavener's *Hymn to the Mother of God* and *Hymn for the Dormition of the Mother of God*, dating from 1985 and expressing the composer's grief at the death of his mother; Gabriel Jackson's *Ave Maria*, commissioned by the Exon Singers in 2004; and *Sainte-Chapelle*, written in 2013 by Eric Whitacre for the 40th anniversary of another world-famous consort, The Tallis Scholars. The Latin text 'Virgo castissima advenit in capellam', commissioned >

▲ The Sixteen's new CD celebrates the legacy of the Eton Choirbook

The Eton Choirbook

In June 2018 the Eton Choirbook was added to the UNESCO Memory of the World register, the documentary heritage equivalent of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. A volume of manuscript music created between 1500 and 1504 still used in religious services at Eton College Chapel, it captures a soundworld of late medieval England that would otherwise have been lost to silence. A uniquely important witness to English music at its pre-Reformation zenith, it was copied in the first few years of the 16th century, a few years before the accession of Henry VIII. This was a time of extraordinarily rich devotional culture.

The Eton Choirbook is one of the largest and most sumptuous music manuscripts. When completed, it contained 93 pieces: 67 'votive



antiphons' or motets of prayer and praise to the Virgin Mary, 24 settings of the Latin Magnificat, a setting of the St Matthew Passion as sung on Palm

Sunday, and a canon based on the text of the Apostles' Creed. Although 98 of its original 224 folios have been lost, the Eton Choirbook contains 50 performable pieces (a further 15 pieces survive in varying states of fragmentation), 35 of which have been recorded commercially since 1951.

The Eton Choirbook Project at Newcastle University seeks to identify all known extant recordings of this repertoire, and to provide interim recordings of previously neglected pieces, in order that they might be available to scholars, students and music lovers. The website also includes indexes of the Choirbook which can be used alongside the facsimile edition published by the Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music in 2010.

research.ncl.ac.uk/etonchoirbook
diamm.ac.uk/publications/eton-choirbook



◀ at Whitacre's request from Charles Anthony Silvestri, describes a young girl kneeling in Sainte-Chapelle in Paris and hearing the voices of angels singing Hosannas around her. Whitacre has said that in writing the piece he was trying to create the effect of Tudor polyphony being refracted through the stained glass and soaring architecture of ancient buildings, as well as through his own imagination.

The final contemporary work, *O virgo prudentissima* by Sir James MacMillan, was premiered by The Sixteen in May 2018 in Eton College Chapel. MacMillan has a close relationship with the choir – his *O bone Jesu* was commissioned for the second Choral Pilgrimage in 2002, and his *Stabat mater* was also premiered by The Sixteen, in London's Barbican in 2016, and performed in the Sistine Chapel last April.

'I found this musical fragment of *O virgo prudentissima* and thought it had Jimmy all over it, so I asked him if he'd write a modern treatment of it,' says Christophers. 'He has stretched us even further than usual, starting with the fragment, then referencing all the well-known composers from the Eton Choirbook, moving into his own idiom and then back to the fragment, before concluding with an Alleluia. Much of what Jimmy writes for professional choirs is very difficult indeed, but the secret is in working out how to rehearse it, and the effort is always worth it.'

The MacMillan piece and new works by Phillip Cooke, Marco Galvani, Joseph Phibbs and Stephen Hough appear on *Star of Heaven*, The Sixteen's new CD on its own Coro label, celebrating the legacy of

the Eton Choirbook. All the contemporary pieces have been commissioned by the Genesis Foundation, which has supported much of The Sixteen's activity in recent years, including its training choir Genesis Sixteen, now in its eighth year and, says Christophers, 'surpassing all our expectations.'

In choosing repertoire for the annual Choral Pilgrimages, Christophers must balance the need to create a programme that will appeal to large audiences with one that will sustain the interest of the singers who will perform it many times in the course of a season; whereas the first pilgrimage consisted of just 12 concerts, now there are 30. Sometimes that means taking risks, as with a Poulenc programme in the 2016/17 season, and 2018's Britten and Cornyshe tour, but audiences are increasingly prepared to trust The Sixteen's name and book tickets even if the repertoire seems unfamiliar; and once they hear the music, says Christophers, they usually love it. 'So many things over the years have increased our audiences for the Pilgrimage, especially the support we've had from Classic FM. It is wonderful for us to be able to introduce people of other faiths and none to this great sacred music, in the beautiful buildings for which most of it was written.' ■

The Sixteen's Choral Pilgrimage 2019 begins on 3 April at Kings Place, London. For further dates and locations and details of associated choral workshop, visit www.thesixteen.com/the-choral-pilgrimage-2019

Clare Stevens works as a writer, editor and publicist in the Welsh Marches, where she sings with Hereford Choral Society.

BEAR UP

Building an organ for a small oratory that would be able to play music from the 17th to 19th centuries called for considerable ingenuity. The project's adviser, **William McVicker**, reports

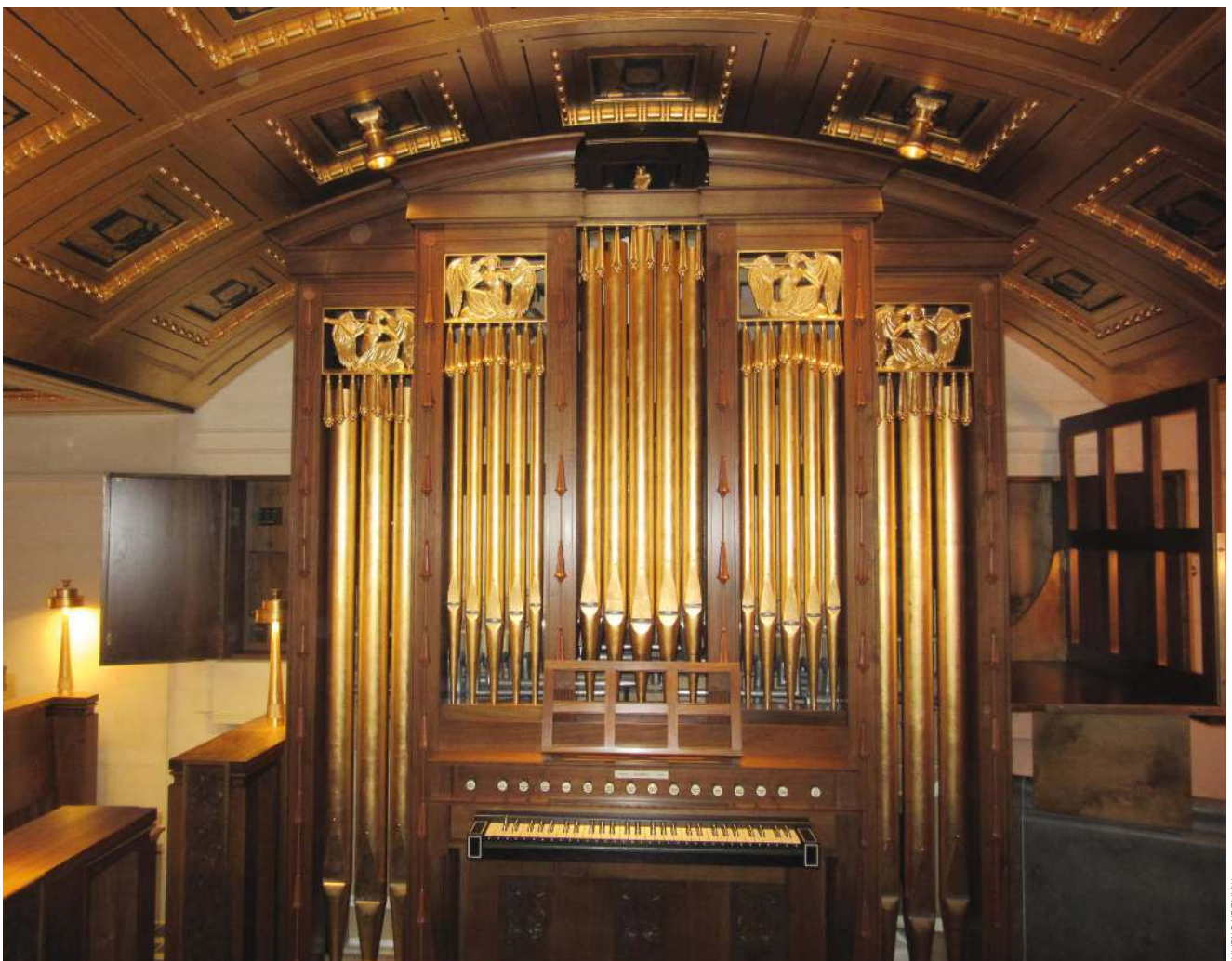
On a hilltop within a deer park overlooking the river Thames and the Culham Court Estate in Berkshire stands the Chapel of Christ the Redeemer. This new public chapel, with an astonishing design by architect Craig Hamilton, performs an important role as an oratory to the Roman Catholic Church of St Thomas More in nearby Twyford. A subtle blend of historical and contemporary

architecture, the chapel holds regular public events including Mass on the last Sunday of the month and on Holy Days of Obligation.

When I became involved in the provision of an organ for the Chapel, the first line of enquiry was in respect of the nature of the liturgy which would grace the elegant, classically informed architecture. Initially, the situation suggested an *orgue de chœur*, but space was at a premium in the loft

and I suspected that a two-manual organ would have to be so modestly proportioned – especially if one division (or both) was enclosed – that it might consist of only a handful of foundational stops. The prospect of the Chapel being a place where music was made professionally (and where visitors might play a wide range of repertoire) encouraged me to think more creatively about what kind of pieces could be

▼ The organ hosts two sets of sounds on a single manual



MANIER ORGANS



▲ The Chapel's design is a subtle blend of historical and contemporary architecture

Chapel of Christ the Redeemer, Culham, Berkshire

MANDER ORGANS (2016)

MANUAL

GG, AA, C-a3 (60 notes)

Open Diapason	8
Stopped Diapason	8
Principal	4
Chimney Flute	4
Twelfth	2 ² / ₃
Fifteenth	2
Tierce	1 ³ / ₅
Trumpet	8

PEDAL

C-f1 (30 notes)

Bourdon 16

Cymbelstern
Nightingale
Thunder
Bear

Keys, pedals and drawstop action are all fully mechanical.

All stops, with the exception of the Open Diapason and Principal, are divided between tenor b and c1.

◀ presented there. I suggested an instrument which looked to 18th-century examples of English organ building, in which the stops were often divided between treble and bass. Once Mander Organs had been appointed, John Mander and I worked together on a scheme that would allow the single manual keyboard to play host to two sets of sounds, with some stops divided between b and c1.

Several other European repertoires have explored the use of solo registers in many different and sophisticated ways: for example, in the music of composers such as Telemann, a simple *manualiter bicinium* would have one solo line in the treble, and a single-voice melodic accompaniment in the bass. In Iberian 17th- and 18th-century music, the right-hand solo parts could be in two voices (*de dos tiples*) or in three (*de tres tiples*). The Culham organ has been constructed to allow such music to be performed. The instrument can, of course, be used in more conventional contrapuntal (fugal) repertoire with pedals – in the German baroque style, for example, for the music of J.S. Bach. Although many trio textures are not possible on a one manual instrument, a handful of such pieces can be reproduced on a split keyboard with some forethought. Split keyboards did not always divide at b/c1, as was the case in 18th-century England; in some areas of Spain (but not all) the division was at

c1/c#1, while in Italy the division could be as high as f1. In addition to the prospect of performing a *plein jeu* or a *grand jeu* on the limited selection of stops at Culham, some other possible registrations might be as follows:

Right Hand (RH) Solo Trumpet (treble)

– for trumpet voluntaries, known as *dessus de trompette* in the French repertoire, or *medio registro de mano derecha* in the Iberian *trompería* style;

Left Hand (LH) (accompaniment)

Diapason / Stopped Diapason bass.

RH (accompaniment) Diapason /

Stopped Diapason treble;

LH Solo Trumpet (bass) – known as *basse de trompette* in the French repertoire, or *medio registro de mano izquierda* (or *baxón* or *baixo*) in the Iberian manner.

RH Cornet *décomposé* 8, 4, 2²/₃, 2,

1³/₅ treble (for Cornet or *jeu de tierce* voluntaries);

LH Diapason / Stopped Diapason bass.

RH (accompaniment) Diapason / Stopped Diapason treble;

LH Cornet *décomposé* 8, 4, 2²/₃, 2, 1³/₅ bass (for French *tierce en taille* or English 18th-century LH Sesquialtera voluntaries).

RH Diapason / Stopped Diapason, Twelfth 2²/₃ treble (for Iberian *Nasardo*, French *Récit de Nazard*, or 18th-century English 'Twelfth' voluntaries);

LH Diapason / Stopped Diapason bass.

While the so-called classical French repertoire is perhaps more familiar to English players, music of our own shores has become much more accessible in the last decade, especially through the wide-ranging catalogue of Fitzjohn Music Publications². One problem is that in 17th- and 18th-century music English players tend to stick religiously to what is written on the page, without recognising the extent to which the music was improvised or adapted to the circumstances (e.g., organ or harpsichord). The detail of English 18th-century performance practice can be found in the treatises of Marsh, Blewitt, Linley and Ludlam³, or in the prefaces to some scores: left-hand parts would often be played in octaves, except where quicker passages precluded such an approach;

trumpet voluntaries would be concluded with both hands on the trumpet stop, to make for a dramatic ending. Where parts crossed over the division of the stops at c1, a certain amount of judicious, improvised rewriting is necessary to prevent the solo and accompaniment parts accidentally passing into each other's domain. The opportunity to provide 'short octaves' with low AA and GG was seized at Culham, as was the inclusion of the split key, to provide C# to allow for later repertoire. Such elements of performing style would have been common currency to 18th- and early 19th-century performers. These days we are too readily bound to the score to feel that we have complete freedom over the music, and we are consequently unnecessarily cautious in our approach to the performance of our own repertoire.

The organ has several unusual features, including a Drum or Thunder pedal; this plays the bottom six notes of the Bourdon (when drawn), adding notes progressively as the pedal is depressed. It can be used in late 18th-century classical French repertoire (e.g. Balbastre) as well as for 19th-century storm effects. Apart from providing an element of sheer enjoyment (or perhaps guilty pleasure), the Cymbelstern and Nightingale suggest other European repertoires, the latter featuring in the

charming music of south Germany, as found in the *Ochsenhauser Orgelbuch*, where the dance music of the court (minuet, gavotte, bourrée, gigue, etc.) was very much in vogue in the Catholic liturgies – as distinct from the chorale-based repertoire of the Lutheran tradition, which characterises the music of the Hanseatic composers as well as that of J.S. Bach. The Nightingale is worked by the usual inverted pipes in liquid, but based on a 17th-century Italian model, which is far more compact than the usual nightingale mechanism. The Cymbelstern employs the traditional construction, with small clock bells, but is believed to be the only one in the UK that is driven in the traditional way by wind, rather than electric motor.

An appropriately engraved stop-knob causes a gilded bear silently to appear at the top of the casework from the centre of the broken cornice. Once the bear has emerged from the façade it can then be heard to growl, making the sound as long as the stop is pulled out. This was a gift to the patron from one of the project team. The bear is made up of two elements: the pipe is a largish wooden Regal with a hole covered by a pallet, which gradually opens, giving a slight crescendo as it sounds; the motor for moving the bear is a pneumatic piston, all designed and manufactured in the Mander

workshop. The switching on and off of the Nightingale, Bear and Cymbelstern are done pneumatically.

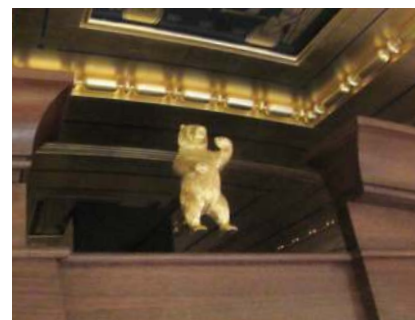
Not all organs have to be the same; one hopes that those visiting the Culham instrument can enjoy something a little different – the opportunities a small but versatile organ affords. ■

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1. E.g. voluntaries by Pepusch or Herschel.
2. www.impulse-music.co.uk/fitzjohnmusic
3. Marsh, John, *Eighteen Voluntaries for the Organ ... To which is prefixed an Explanation of the ... Stops etc.* (London, 1791); Blewitt, Jonas, *A Complete Treatise on the Organ to which is added a Set of Explanatory Voluntaries etc.* (Longman & Broderip, London, c.1795); Linley, Francis, *Practical Introduction to the Organ* (Hamilton, London, c. 1800); Ludlam William, *Letter to the Gentleman's Magazine*, 1772: in Renshaw, Martin and Barnes, Alan *The Life and Work of John Snetzler* (Scolar, Aldershot, 1994).

William McVicker is organ curator at the Royal Festival Hall, chairman of the Association of Independent Organ Advisers, and Professor of Organology at the Royal Academy of Music, where he was recently elected an Honorary Associate. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Institute of Musical Instrument Technology.

▼ (top row, from left) The Cymbelstern, Nightingale, and Short octave; (bottom row) the Bear stop causes the Bear to rise above the case (right)



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ALAIN HONOREZ

Dance to the music

Gavin Bryars talks to **Brian Morton** about his new choral Requiem, composed in collaboration with choreographer David Dawson for Dutch National Ballet

The defining quality of David Dawson's dance-making is its unforced humanity. His choreography always seems like an extension of natural human movement, expressing emotions without excess rhetoric or artificiality. In that, he seems a natural match for composer Gavin Bryars, who is still perhaps best known for two open-form works, *The Sinking of the Titanic* and *Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet*, which combine research, found material and a 'pataphysical approach [finding imaginary solutions] to fact and narrative with a profound empathy and respect for ordinary people, whether they are musicians on a doomed liner or a rough sleeper in South London.

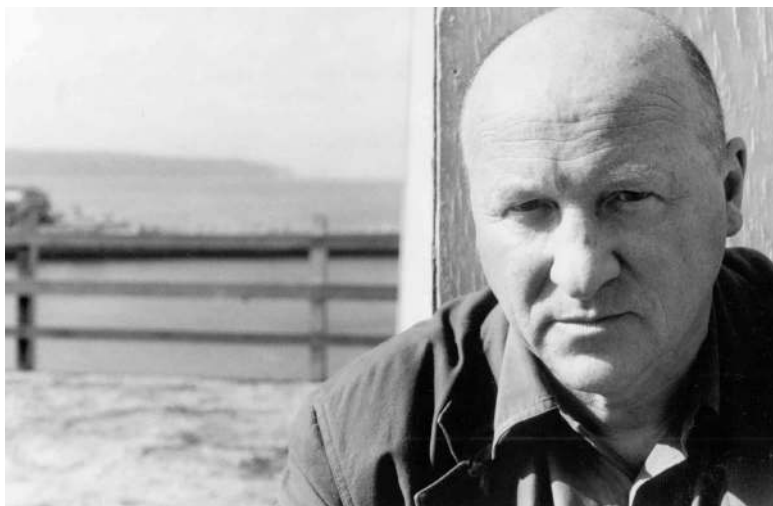
Dawson and Bryars have worked together before. The 2005 ballet *Reverence*, made for the Mariinsky in St Petersburg, used material from Bryars's Third String Quartet, which was later orchestrated. Five

years later, Bryars produced a new score for Dawson's *The Third Light*, a meditation on the properties and metaphors of light, made for the 40th anniversary of the Royal Ballet of Flanders. Now, though, they are embarking on a new work that presents unique challenges not just to the composer and choreographer, but to the theatre as well. *Requiem* premieres at Dutch National Ballet in Amsterdam on 9 February 2019.

The date is perhaps significant. Bryars says, 'A lot of people assumed that the piece is intended as a reference to the centenary of the Armistice ... I'd probably have turned it down if that had been the case!' Bryars owned to some reservations about marking the 100th anniversary in 2012 of the *Titanic* sinking, but acknowledged that the productions of that year were only a positive blip in the progress of what has become a well-loved and constantly

▲ Dutch National Ballet rehearse David Dawson's *Requiem*, performed to a new choral score by Gavin Bryars

▷



▲ Composer Gavin Bryars has experience of writing for dance, having worked with Merce Cunningham, Lucinda Childs, Édouard Lock, and now David Dawson

◀ evolving piece. More recently, he has declined to write music to mark the anniversary of the Oklahoma bombing ('What if Trump turned up?'), though he is considering writing something that expresses a more general mourning, as he did when asked to contribute to a group programme of works marking the 9/11 attacks. He shrinks from opportunism, as anyone who knows the work will already sense.

Stripped of any external resonance, *Requiem* promises to be a work in which Bryars and Dawson again explore dance and music as pure and inter-related forms. But there is a complication; for this is a score that involves not just orchestra, but a choir as

pit.' Bryars produces a fascinating drawing of the layout, which already looks complicated, even though he has decided to dispense with timpani, piano and celeste. 'It might be that we do what they do with *The Rite of Spring*, and just take out the first three rows, to accommodate a larger pit.'

Most people to whom I mention *Requiem* assume that I am talking about *Cadman Requiem*, a key item in Bryars's evolution as a vocal composer. It would make sense, but for his resistance to what he calls, with evident distaste, 'catching the moment', since that earlier piece is dedicated to his friend and sound engineer Bill Cadman, who died in the Lockerbie bombing of December 1988. Had he gone back and looked at that very personal piece again? 'Yes, but only really to make sure that what I am doing now is completely different, and just to see how I had handled the various elements of the Requiem.'

Bryars's association with dance goes back to his long tenure with the Merce Cunningham group, which continued after Cunningham's death but which has now been gently put aside, with the understanding that some works may be revived in future. How do later experiences with choreographers compare? 'Merce made no demands on you. You knew the basic design of the dance, but were otherwise left alone. Working with Lucinda Childs was different again. She would specify the length of a movement and the metronome markings – so you basically knew how many steps were involved – but

'Having a text means that you have a whole other layer of meaning, which is relatively unusual in dance'

well. Unusual, surely. 'There may be more,' says Bryars, 'but I can only think of Stravinsky's *Les noces* and Lord Berners's *Wedding Bouquet*, and it's often done with a narrator rather than a choir, which I think is rather a pity.' Berners is an old enthusiasm, one of a number of preterite or marginalised composers whom Bryars has helped keep in view. 'Obviously, having a text means that you have a whole other layer of meaning, which is relatively unusual in dance.' The text is drawn from the traditional Requiem Mass, 'but without the *Dies Irae*, and with the *Agnus Dei* done very fast and loud – *fff* – and with the trumpets going full blast.'

So far, so (un)predictable. Bryars takes a strikingly personal and gently subversive line on most traditional material; but aren't there challenges to be met here, even before the music is discussed? 'Yes, there's the simple problem of where to put everyone! You could do it as they do *Les noces*, with everyone – dancers and singers – on stage, but that would be impossibly crowded, so they're all going to be in the

apart from that, it was down to me to fill the musical space. With Édouard Lock [founder of the Quebec contemporary dance group La La La Human Steps], it was a matter of working with existing music in new versions, so that was a different situation again. David, I've found, is amazingly respectful, almost in awe of the composer. I've had an entirely free hand.'

This seems characteristic of Dawson's methodology, which is perhaps too engaged and personal to be called a methodology. His aim, always, is to blend together sound and movement in a way that ever more fully expresses the human form. And it is scarcely heretical to think that a Requiem should evoke vitality as much as mourning, or that a work which seems to engage with Last Things should not represent a new beginning, too. ■

Formerly a presenter of jazz and classical music on BBC Radio 3, Brian Morton is a writer and broadcaster based in the west of Scotland.

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Courtesy of Bloomsbury Organ Day, we have a pair of tickets for Isabelle Demers's recital to give away; quote code 'BLOOMSBURY'.

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It may be Scotland's oldest university, but it engages fully with the present and the future. **Maggie Hamilton** visits the University of St Andrews, *Choir & Organ's* 2019 New Music partners

Protruding like a Scottish terrier head into the North Sea between the Firth of Forth and the River Tay, the ancient kingdom of Fife has a rich history. From the 11th century onwards, it grew in royal and political significance, with Dunfermline Abbey becoming the last resting place for Scotland's royalty for over 300 years, and a new hunting palace at Falkland being used by monarchs of the House of Stuart, including Mary, Queen of Scots. A key milestone in its culture was the founding of the first Scottish university in 1413 at St Andrews – a town to become famous hundreds of years later as the 'home of golf', a film set for *Chariots of Fire*, and the place where Prince William met Catherine Middleton.

Steeped in history as it is, one might assume that the University of St Andrews would err on the side

of the traditional, if not conservative. But nothing could be further from the truth, not least in its Music Centre, which not only seems to lead the field in imaginative collaborations with other departments, but also commissions and performs an exceptional number of new compositions as well as running an annual New Music Week each February.

St Andrews differs from universities like Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen in one key respect: it doesn't offer a degree course. However, with the option in the Scottish system of taking a modular degree, a student majoring in, say, chemistry or classics may take music modules – Electronic Music, an Introduction to Ethnomusicology, Scottish Music, and Advanced Performance, among others – as part of the course. ▸

▼ St Andrews Cathedral, built in 1158, fell into ruin after the 16th-century Scottish Reformation

▲ The Byre Theatre, in which the University presents a fully staged opera each year



▲ St Salvator's Chapel Choir is the flagship choir of the University. Every member receives a scholarship, which pays for weekly singing lessons and an annual choir tour

◀ And with multiple music ensembles run by the University or by students – three chapel choirs, a madrigal group, six a cappella groups, two opera groups, three orchestras, and chamber ensembles – students have a wide choice of musical experiences available to them. Director of music Michael Downes explains: 'There are eight modules that students can take during the first two years of the degree, and one module at honours level, taken by serious performers who want to play a public half-hour recital as part of their degree. We have around 50 instrumental scholarships which pay for instrumental lessons,

traineeship for a recent graduate from the University to work part of the week at the University and part of the week at the SCO in Edinburgh.'

In addition to participating in the regular choirs and vocal ensembles, students who sing may also become involved in the St Andrews Voices festival (see page 32), which started in 2012 and works closely with the music department, bringing in high-profile performers – soloists and a cappella groups – to work with the students, and give masterclasses; in 2018, these were led by Scottish tenor and classical music broadcaster Jamie MacDougall and Scottish Opera's

'Music at St Andrews is a meeting point between students of all different disciplines, and they like the openness'

and coaching from visiting groups – we've just announced the Fitzwilliam Quartet as our string quartet-in-residence. The Scottish Chamber Orchestra is our permanent orchestra-in-residence. They come five times a year to give an orchestral concert, but we also have a range of other projects with them: their players give chamber concerts, run the community orchestra with us, give masterclasses, and we run composition projects where players from the orchestra sit alongside our players to try out and perform new works. We also have an annual graduate

head of music, Derek Clark.

St Andrews certainly seems to offer as much as any university that runs degree courses – and perhaps with one additional advantage, says Downes: 'In some universities offering music degrees, lead roles in, say, operas or orchestras are usually given to music students, whereas here it's very open: we welcome students from all disciplines, and the people who are best qualified for the opportunities get the chance regardless of what subject they're studying. Many of our opportunities

are also open to all without audition. Music here is a meeting point between students of all different disciplines, and they like the openness.'

Interaction with other departments doesn't stop with the music groups: collaboration with other disciplines yields imaginative projects, such as TheoArtistry (see page 41), partnering composers with theologians; an ongoing project with the French department on translating opera – students of French translated a new version of Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* performed with Byre Opera in 2015; and an opera project in conjunction with the School of Physics and Astronomy explored the parallels between Newtonian ideas of light and the way in which John Eccles's *The Judgment of Paris* was composed. 'It's part of an ongoing project called Shine,' explains Downes: 'We've commissioned new pieces of instrumental music exploring this theme. Another project, Music Planet, is looking at connections between music and the physical environment in relation to environmental change. We took our new music groups to give a series of concerts at the Orkney Science Festival in September, and included a specially commissioned piece based on seal songs collected by a sea mammal research institute.'

So far, so imaginative. But one criticism that can sometimes be levelled at universities is that they perpetuate the distinction between town and gown. Not so at St Andrews, where music is in the forefront of building connections with the local community. Downes elaborates: 'I conduct the St Andrews Chorus, which is Scotland's largest choral society, with some 180 members. We also have the

St Andrews and Fife Community Orchestra, which is a three-way collaboration between the town, the University and the SCO. They bring in coaches, and often their players play as soloists with the orchestra, or in the sections alongside the players. It's an unauditioned orchestra, and we think it's extremely unusual for quite inexperienced local players to be able to pick up their instrument and come and play alongside players from one of the country's best orchestras within a university context. Most of our other groups also have members from outside the student body; the only one that is purely for students is St Salvator's Chapel Choir.'

For over 500 years, services have been sung in St Salvator's Chapel, founded in 1450. The tradition continues with the current Chapel Choir and an upper-voice choir, with a student-led choir providing music at St Leonard's, the University's sister chapel. St Salvator's Chapel Choir is the group with whom *Choir & Organ* will work most closely in 2019, as our New Music partners. Claire Innes-Hopkins is acting university organist and director of chapel music while Tom Wilkinson is on sabbatical leave, and will oversee all the New Music commissions. She explains, '[The Choir's] 31 singers all enjoy scholarships, which cover weekly singing lessons, an annual Chapel Choir tour ... and a free Sunday lunch! The singers are expected to commit fully to the Choir, and be prepared to sacrifice other things for it. During the week, they sing Anglican Evensong on Wednesday and Sunday, and also the University Service on Sunday at 11am, which is ecumenical, with hymns, prayers, a couple of pieces from the Choir, and a sermon.'

▼ The Scottish Chamber Orchestra is the University's orchestra-in-residence. In addition to giving five concerts a year in the town, members give masterclasses and work together with the St Andrews and Fife Community Orchestra



ST ANDREWS VOICES FESTIVAL

Artistic director Sonia Stevenson in conversation with the Editor

I grew up in St Andrews. It's a fantastic place, cultural and musical, and I felt I wanted to give something back.

In 2009 I went to the Aldeburgh Festival and was struck by the similarities between the two towns – both on the North Sea coast, with a similar demographic. And that sparked the idea of a festival in St Andrews. The morning after the concert, I woke early, sat up in bed and started writing, filling pages with ideas, dreaming up this festival. Back in St Andrews, I asked Michael Downes, who had just started in his role, 'What do you think about starting a music festival here?' and he'd had exactly the same idea.

We hit upon the idea of Voices as a theme: a significant proportion of the population sing, the local society is very active, and singing is a big part of the University. We also wanted a festival that would appeal to many different people. St Andrews has an interesting population: students, the retired population, and visiting tourists and golfers. The singing voice can capture anybody – I think everyone has the power to sing, even if only in the shower: it's part of human nature. So the voice as a thread running through the festival is something that everyone can latch on to.

We have a very broad spectrum of events: sing-along films for families (the Disney classic *Beauty and the Beast* in 2018); classical music – opera, choral music, song; jazz; folk. We have the highest calibre of professionals performing, like [in 2018] Tenebrae, Scottish Opera, and Kathryn Tickell. We also have fringe and community events: for a few months we ran a schools

workshop with Tenebrae artists visiting local schools; they all performed together on 27 October to hundreds of people at the new V&A in Dundee.

Often we have a few months' outreach in the lead-up to the festival: we've worked with primary schools on a project called 'Happy' with Voces8, looking at how singing can improve wellbeing and happiness; and we've just started a new initiative with the Kinkell Byre, a converted barn just on the clifftop. It's been used for wedding venues, but now they're keen to do more musical events. Our first will be a Burns supper in January, with the folk singer Robyn Stapleton, who in 2014 won the BBC Radio Scotland's Young Traditional Musician Award.

As well as local people, about a third of our audience comes from outside Fife – people from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Perth, a few from the rest of the UK, and a few internationals too. We want to see the festival develop in that direction. What will attract people to the festival? Maybe they'll come for a particular performer, then also go to something else, or develop their own skills in a workshop, go for a walk along the beach, eat at one of the restaurants in town, or relax at a late-night folk or jazz gig in a bar.

We've presented several events with the spoken voice: a professor spoke about the science of singing; author Janice Galloway talked about her new book of short stories inspired by operas; and in 2018 children's author David Almond presented 'Tales and Tunes' with Kathryn Tickell.

What motivates me is creating magical moments where something becomes more



than the sum of its parts: when there's something in the air, and you can feel it in the hush of an audience who are utterly enraptured by what they're experiencing.

Next year we're developing a very exciting, unique project with light projection company Luxmuralis. Our idea is to use the theme of 'Space' to take over the whole town and fill it with light and with voices. We will create a central venue representing the Sun, where Luxmuralis's stunning projections will be accompanied by a specially curated programme of themed live vocal music (so much music is inspired by starlight). There will also be satellite venues representing each planet – churches, university colleges, community halls, shops, cafes, golf venues – with each venue curated by a school or community group. Professional musicians and composers will work with each of these groups to help them compose music and a soundscape to match each of these buildings. It's an ambitious project that has the potential to draw an audience from far and wide, as well as to bring the whole community together. The future of St Andrews Voices is very bright!

▼ The 2018 St Andrews Voices festival included a singing masterclass given by renowned Scottish tenor and broadcaster Jamie MacDougall, and Scottish Opera's head of music, Derek Clark



AGGIE HAMILTON

St Andrews Voices is grateful to all its supporters, including Creative Scotland, Fife Events Fund, the University of St Andrews, and many other trusts, sponsors and individuals.

Next festival: 17-20 October 2019
www.standrewsvoices.com

► The University's organs include the four-manual Hradetzky in St Salvador's Chapel (top); and a restored T.C. Lewis (below) has been purchased for the new Music Centre building

◄ The Choir's brief is not limited to the Chapel services, however; in addition to the annual choir tour are concerts, singing at graduation ceremonies, and recordings. In 2015 the University launched its own record label, Sanctiandree, and releases have included *Bach and the Stile Antico*, *Annunciations* (including the six pieces composed on the TheoArtistry project alongside works by James MacMillan), and, most recently, *Resonances of Waterloo* (see review, p.91).

The University also enjoys the services of five organ scholars, three of whom play for all the Chapel services, and the other two playing for services at St Leonard's. Organists play the tracker-action, four-manual Hradetzky (1973) in the Chapel; a tracker-action, two-manual Walker (1994) in St Leonard's Chapel; a two-manual Harrison & Harrison (1976) in Younger Hall, which is also used for graduations; and some students play at churches around the town too. The University also runs an annual Organ Week (from the last week of July; see Summer Schools supplement, page 43), which attracts both amateur organists and aspiring professionals to study repertoire and technique in sessions presented by international coaches.

The building of a new, purpose-built music centre – whose foundations are already laid – is set to launch the music department on an exciting new phase, and will at the same time enhance the connections between the University and the town. It will include a flexible-use recital hall, suitable as an orchestral rehearsal studio but also as a venue for small-scale performance; rehearsal rooms of various sizes for the different ensembles; an electronic music studio; recording facilities; 12 practice rooms; a library; office facilities; and a 'new' T.C. Lewis organ, which came from Walmsgate Hall, near Louth, via Horeb Chapel in Llanfairfechan and then the Willis factory, where it has been restored.

With its combination of imaginative projects, forward-looking programming, and visiting professional musicians, St Andrews continues to grow as a cultural centre, which can only add to the town's other renowned attractions – even if you're not a golfer, or in search of a prince ... ■

St Andrews New Music Week 2019 runs from 20-26 February, and includes a concert of Baltic music for choir and Estonian cellist Allar Kaasik, and the world premieres of an anthem by Sam Jackson, and the Choir & Organ New Music commission by Seamus Heath.
www.st-andrews.ac.uk/music



CHRIS BRACE



CHRIS BRACE



Be prepared

A move and a merger have given fresh energy to the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, and not least to its organ department, as **James McVinnie** reports

The Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (RBC) is at the start of a bright and exciting new chapter. Having moved in September 2017 from its former home in the city centre, the conservatoire now occupies a brand new, purpose-built campus in

the city's 'learning quarter' at a cost, according to its website, of £57 million. The floor plan of its new site reads as a tantalising cross-section of a wide-ranging and imaginative set of disciplines from the performing arts — you can seemingly study anything to do with

music here. Its facilities are lavish: a 500 capacity traditional concert and smaller recital hall, many practice and rehearsal rooms as well as no fewer than seven recording studios, a mastering suite for work in music production, and a multi-purpose performance space called



◀ Royal Birmingham Conservatoire's purpose-built Organ Studio with its 1936 Eule/Hill, Norman & Beard instrument, originally belonging to Lady Susi Jeans

Fairs. They are assisted by two visiting professors – Nathan Laube from Eastman School of Music and Martin Schmeding from Hochschule für Musik in Leipzig – together with four Junior Fellows: Nicholas Wearne, Richard Pinel, Steven Grahl, and Martin Rawles. Over the past 15 years, the RBC organ department has developed a reputation for excellence, offering first-rate training for young organists, involving study of the core repertoire to the highest standards, together with all the complementary additional skills to equip them for the realities of the profession today.

A significant part of the RBC's new floor plan is a purpose built Organ Studio (entirely separate from the main Concert

In addition to the Conservatoire's brace of smaller two-manual practice organs by Kenneth Tickell and a 1980 Walker, students have (limited) access to the new organ (2014) by Marc Garnier at the University of Birmingham's concert hall — a striking three-manual instrument, which has an additional ruckpositiv division at a = 415 entirely separate from the main instrument, with its own keyboard. Other organs used for tuition are the Walker (1993) at St Chad's Cathedral, the Thomas Swarbrick (1715)/Nicholson & Co. (1993) at St Philip's Cathedral, the Klais (2001) at Symphony Hall, and the Hill (1834) at the Town Hall. Plans for the next five years include commissioning a small Italian baroque instrument for the RBC Organ Studio.

Speaking to Daniel Moulton about his work at RBC, it is clear that much thought has gone into realising what it means for

Much thought has gone into realising what it means for organists working in the 21st century

Hall), with generous church-like acoustics sympathetic to the organ, and seating just shy of 100. The Concert Hall's present organ dates from 1936, built by Eule/Hill, Norman & Beard, originally for the study of Lady Susi Jeans in her home in Surrey (which she bequeathed to the Royal School of Church Music upon her death in 1993). Jeans was a significant figure in the organ reform movement; her two-manual instrument was the first neo-classical organ in the UK, and it was moved to the Conservatoire in 2007, becoming its main teaching instrument. Plans are in motion to commission a brand new organ for the Organ Studio, but legal technicalities delaying the signing of a contract prevent any further disclosure at the time of writing. The organ will be in the Arp Schnitger northern European style, offering students uncompromising insight into the performance of music from the Golden Era of the organ in the 17th and 18th centuries. Future plans also involve the commissioning of a second instrument for the Organ Studio in the 19th-century vein.

organists working in the first part of the 21st century, whether it be developing a career as a recitalist, continuo player, accompanist, or teacher. Moulton is at pains to point out that each individual student is encouraged to develop their own musical personality. First-year studies cover a broad but detailed cross-section of all of the main schools of organ playing styles and periods. Each subsequent year, undergraduates have more freedom to choose what they study, and by their fourth and final year they are encouraged effectively to design their own course, according to their interests and strengths. Students are also steered towards the music of Olivier Messiaen, without doubt the most striking and significant voice for the organ in the 20th century, in the form of a hotly contested prize generously donated in 2018 by Dame Gillian Weir. The competition is open to all students at the RBC and will be awarded each year for the next 10 years to the best performance of a major work or works by Messiaen.

As well as 1-2 hours of individual weekly performance lessons, undergraduates are required to engage in contextual studies: ▶

The Hub — 'an experimental black box performance venue'. The Conservatoire offers courses in performance across all main instruments including voice, jazz, composition, choral and orchestral conducting, experimental performance, music technology, and music production, as well as a notable musicology department for research. In 2017, the Conservatoire also merged with the Birmingham School of Acting, creating a 'single world-class home for developing the next generation of talented, versatile performers'.

At the heart of this artistic cauldron is its organ department, led by two highly regarded, expert and committed teachers, Daniel Moulton and Henry

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COURTESY ROYAL BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE



◀ harmony and counterpoint (which also takes into account preparation for the Royal College of Organists diploma examinations), and lectures in music history. Additional classes include Alexander technique; mechanisms for dealing with performance anxiety; learning techniques; practical musicianship, covering keyboard skills (again relating to RCO exams); continuo playing; and accompanying choirs in the Anglican choral tradition. Most of the 10 current undergraduates take on organ-playing work in churches across Birmingham. A scheme involving the music department of St Philip's Anglican cathedral enables RBC organ students to gain experience in accompanying part of the cathedral liturgies, without the commitment of a full-time organ scholarship. There is also a link with Birmingham Town Hall and Symphony Hall, where students gain experience in assisting and page-turning for visiting organ recitalists, as well as engaging in outreach work with school groups. RBC Junior Fellow Richard Pinel has started a scheme in which students work on accompaniment skills with singers from the Choir of Jesus College, Cambridge. Organ scholarships are on offer from many notable satellite choral foundations nearby including Coventry Cathedral, St Mary's Warwick, and St Peter's Wolverhampton. The department also embarks on short periods of study abroad: recent trips have included visits to Alkmaar, Amsterdam, Leipzig, Freiberg, Merseburg, Caen and Paris.

As a gap-year alternative to a cathedral organ scholarship, the Conservatoire offers a one-year pre-degree course, tailor-made and offered on a full- or part-time basis. The MMus course, also offered on a full- or part-time basis (over one or two years respectively), entails a small amount of written material together with a performance presentation of a major work or collection from the organ repertoire. There are also a number of

◀ 'Expert, committed teachers': the RBC organ department is headed by Daniel Moulton (top) and Henry Fairs (below, playing the Marc Garnier organ at the University of Birmingham)

▶ A lesson on one of the Conservatoire's Kenneth Tickell organs

professional organists who study at the Conservatoire on an occasional basis.

Both Daniel Moulton and Henry Fairs are keen to encourage their students to develop a professional portfolio of recital work in the UK as well as the possibility of study abroad — several students have spent a term or more in Leipzig as part of their studies, and there are also regular Erasmus students who come from mainland Europe to study at Birmingham.

The RBC is an institution whose organ department offers a first-rate experience to its students. As a musical centre, Birmingham gives London a run for its money, with two extraordinary venues: Symphony Hall, with excellent acoustics, is home to the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Chorus; and Birmingham Town Hall, its sister venue, hosts a broad and diverse range of events. To be a student at the RBC is to be immersed in an enviably rich, world-class musical atmosphere. ■

Organist James McVinnie has collaborated with some of the world's leading composers, producers and performers of classical, contemporary, popular and experimental music.



COURTESY ROYAL BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE



Freestyle BY GRAEME KAY

Britten's *War Requiem* finds a new stage; and a wallow in *Great Cathedral Organs* nostalgia

Over the years we've got used to stagings of Handel's dramatic oratorios. In Bach-land, Jonathan Miller's televised version of the *St Matthew Passion* in 1993 drew the audience in to share in a small-scale community story-telling ritual; and those who saw it won't forget English National Opera's version of the *St John Passion* in 2000, with Mark Padmore as the Evangelist approaching the footlights at the end, tenderly holding a live lamb. ENO's latest choral venture, a production of Britten's *War Requiem*, must be counted a success. With our Remembrance-season heads filled with WWI iconography – not least through Peter Jackson's feature film *They Shall Not Grow Old* – there was a risk of blunting the power of the music, the words of the Requiem and Wilfrid Owen's poetry with overlays of visual cliché. Director Daniel Kramer and his designer Wolfgang Tillmans largely avoided this by juxtaposing projections from Ernst Friedrich's shocking 1924 anti-war book *Krieg dem Kriege!*, a sequence of fairly anodyne tree-and-flower pictures, and moving images from that great symbol of reconciliation, Coventry Cathedral. Bracing moving tableaux for each movement signalled themes rather than an overall narrative. A large, everyman chorus (ENO's own plus the guest singers from *Porgy and Bess*, and Finchley Children's Music Group) were witnesses, and victims of events allusive of knife fights, bombings and ethnic cleansing. Perhaps the most striking of these tableaux is a military funeral accompanying the Sanctus, the scene set with the startling visual coup of an 'instant' snowstorm. Laced throughout the action are characters portrayed by the soloists Emma Bell, Roderick Williams and David Butt Philip. Britten's music still suffers from the handicap that many even experienced music-lovers just don't like the sound it makes. But with its echoes of *Billy Budd* and compellingly imaginative musical realisations of the poetry, in this production conducted by Martyn Brabbins, Britten's overwhelmingly powerful anti-war commemoration must surely win a new generation of friends for the composer.



▲ Roderick Williams in *War Requiem*

For a teenager with an interest in the organ in the 1960s, there were two great collectible LP series: Lionel Rogg's superb Bach recordings on the Metzler organ of the Grossmünster, Zurich on Oryx, and EMI's Great Cathedral Organ series. Ah, the visceral thrill of saving up one's pocket money for the next volume, the trip to the record store, the visual delights of the sleeves, and the terror of scratching the vulnerable vinyl with a clumsy hand on the needle... Back in 2011, EMI re-released the GCO series in a box set: 129 pieces of music spread across 13 CDs – including bonus tracks from Brian Runnett at Norwich and Fernando Germani at Selby Abbey. TV has appropriated the concept of the box set to signify something that should be binge-consumed, and GCO is a series which, when occasionally feasted upon, for me has the same effect as Proust's madeleine – I am back at Holy Trinity, Dunfermline, struggling with my technique and inability to make the 1895 C. & F. Hamilton instrument sound like Rogg's Metzler or Noel Rawsthorne's Willis. Then, my 'local' heroes were Francis Jackson, Roger Fisher, Nicholas Kynaston, Melville Cooke and the other virtuosi of the GCO recordings. My most recent nostalgia trip made me marvel again not only at the superb quality of the original recordings but the remastering which preserved the full warmth of the LP experience with none of the brittleness so often associated with digital sound. As I write this, I am listening to Arthur Wills playing Franck's Final in B flat – Ely Cathedral's pungent reeds, so vividly captured, would bring down the walls of Jericho. ■

Graeme Kay is a digital platforms producer for BBC Radio 3 and 4.

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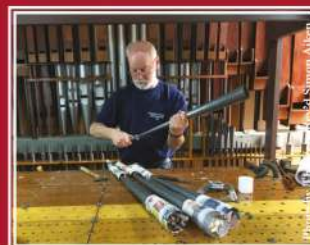


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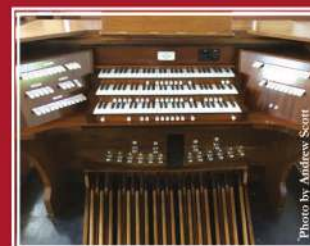


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NEW MUSIC

Anselm McDonnell *Asphyxiate*

Easter text: Anselm McDonnell & Margaret McKerron

The encounter between Mary Magdalene and the risen Christ is explored in a work for unaccompanied eight-part choir, opening *Choir & Organ's* 2019 New Music partnership with the University of St Andrews. Composer Anselm McDonnell talks to **Shirley Ratcliffe**

Although he had been playing guitar since the age of 9, it was never Anselm McDonnell's intention to read music at university. 'Originally, I decided to follow my father into visual art. He is a painter and potter, and a part-time minister in the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland.' Music was his hobby, and during his teenage years McDonnell won several awards for his performances on guitar. 'I hadn't learnt to read music,' he explains, 'but after my GCSEs I decided that it would be useful and started to study it. Around the same time as I was sitting my A levels I was really enjoying the composing element, so I decided I would take music at university instead of art.' Now a third-year PhD composition student studying with Piers Hellowell at Queen's University in his home town of Belfast, McDonnell first applied in 2012 for the BMus course there. 'The learning-curve was steep, as I had little familiarity with classical music and experienced it all at the same time: Ligeti next to Beethoven, and Birtwistle next to Schumann. I was still dabbling with the idea of performing, and trained in classical guitar while at university; but eventually composition won out. I truly love performing, but I needed a larger creative outlet than interpreting what other people had written.'

How did McDonnell set about making up for his lack of knowledge? 'I listened with open ears, sifting everything and assessing it, taking elements I found desirable or meaningful and jettisoning what I saw as anodyne or unnecessary



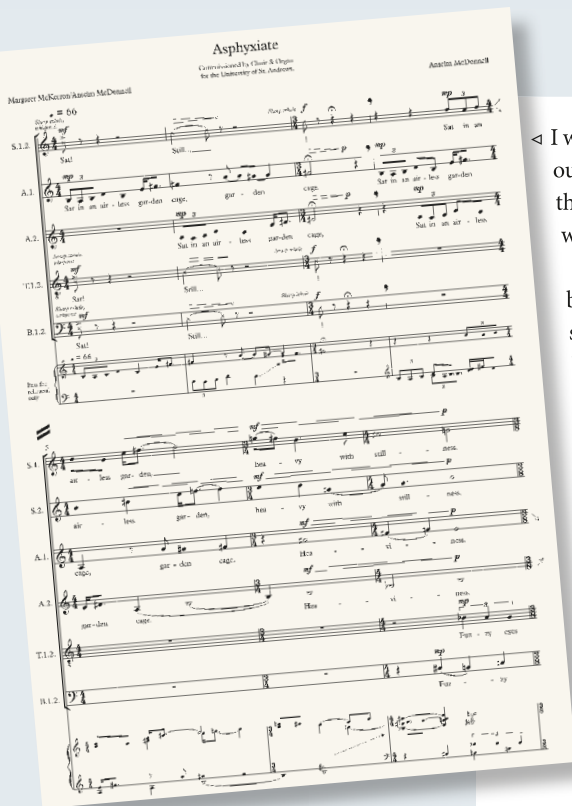
▲ Anselm McDonnell: 'I love performing, but I needed a larger creative outlet than just interpretation'

for the music I imagined creating. There are certainly large and embarrassing gaps in my knowledge, but I read voraciously, and when I discover a composer I like, I dig deeper into their work. It never felt like a mountain that needed to be tackled, because I love listening to music and discovering what is new; around every corner is an expression or idea waiting to be discovered and appreciated. The element I most had to work at was notation because I didn't read a note [of music]. To me it was the key that would open up the mystery of how to create these sounds and it still is.'

McDonnell describes Piers Hellowell's influence on his music as subtle: 'These are extremely practical concerns: clarity of

notation, an entrepreneurial approach to generating performances and the ability to articulate musical intentions. We have many fruitful discussions regarding wider landscapes and architectural issues. His archipelago structures – small islands of music that orbit larger ones – are especially important to me as inspiration for the structural models of my solo instrumental works.'

After achieving his BMus, McDonnell went to Cardiff University to study for his Master's with Robert Fokkens and Pedro Faria Gomes. 'My year in Cardiff was formative and it was very helpful to grapple with new issues I hadn't considered before. I started to regularly hear the music ►



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Claire Innes-Hopkins conducts St Salvador's Chapel Choir in the premiere of *Asphyxiate* during the Easter Day Service at 11am on 21 April 2019, in St Salvador's Chapel, University of St Andrews.

◀ I was writing and became prolific in my output. It was a year where I etched out the beginnings of the space in which I wanted to create music.'

McDonnell's Reformed Presbyterian background is fundamental to this space: 'In Reformed theology, the Word is fundamental to all liturgical practices and every area of the Christian life. To realise this emphasis in a musical way, the structures and even the surface level of my music are often founded on text or narrative. It is a symbiotic relationship, as space is left for musical development, and the music occasionally influences the use of certain textural elements. This process is less tangible in my choral works (as words are obviously at the forefront), but in my instrumental pieces

performers are often asked to speak or whisper, as the text that forms the foundation of the work seeps through to its surface layers and reveals itself.'

In 2016 he applied for the then new TheoArtistry project at the University of St Andrews, in which the University's music department collaborated with its Institute for Theology, Imagination and the Arts (ITIA). McDonnell was one of six young composers (selected out of 100) who would work with six PhD-candidate theologians to create new choral works, the project being overseen by James MacMillan. 'I applied for the project because the connection that was being drawn between contemporary composition and religious faith highly appealed to me, as it was a discussion I felt was nonexistent or muted in other spheres. I found Sir James's thoughts on the sentimentality and distant focus on eternity in much modern sacred music very interesting. My own music, like his, seeks to address issues of reality and pain, terror and awe, not simply presenting a transcendent Christian existence unmarred by sin or unshaken by the sheer otherness of God. As I was a part of the project quite early on in my PhD, it has shaped my composition since then, and I have become a lot more explicit about the role of faith and Biblical themes in my creative voice.'

For his C&O commission for St Andrews University, McDonnell was asked to work with ITIA's Margaret McKerron. The two had already collaborated in 2017 on the TheoArtistry project, on a choral work *Hinneni*, which was recorded on the CD *Annunciations*, alongside the five other new pieces and works by James MacMillan. The result of this current collaboration is a choral work for Easter Day, *Asphyxiate*.

'Margaret is fantastic to work with, as she is very sympathetic to the needs of a composer regarding a text and the process of composing during which directions must sometimes be changed. For the C&O commission we decided to focus on Mary Magdalene, as we wanted to describe the resurrection from the perspective of an eyewitness. Mary Magdalene's account felt the most personal to us, according to the Gospel records of her history with Christ.

'The title *Asphyxiate* is a reference to the breathlessness that can be caused by grief and extended weeping. Mary feels enclosed and stifled in her situation, as if the air around her is thin – all her hopes in Christ have come crashing down. The revelation of his resurrection at the end of the piece when he softly calls her by name – one of the most poignant and tender greetings in Scripture – is as if oxygen has come rushing into her lungs.

'The effect I am aiming to achieve is a gradual unravelling of tension created by the widening of intervals. Initially, the harmony is very close, giving an edge-like quality to the music, but as the spaces in the chords increase to create warm and tender sounds, this tension is dissipated. Textural activity is also highly important in my music and contributes to this; I use polyphony to create complex levels of layers, which can then be swept aside, giving a sense of emergence from a thicket or web into clear air.'

What are Anselm McDonnell's plans after he completes his PhD? 'A question designed to spread dread in the heart of any artist! I plan to apply for lecturing positions in composition. I enjoy teaching and it is the ideal job where I can spread knowledge and appreciation of contemporary music while continuing to compose.' ■ www.anselmguitar.co.uk

INSIDE JOB

The TheoArtistry project at the University of St Andrews



GEORGE CORBETT

▲ George Corbett

TheoArtistry is a new project seeking to create a space for creative dialogue between theologians and artists. Based in the Institute for Theology, Imagination and the Arts (ITIA), TheoArtistry explores the power of the arts to communicate the divine.

Sometimes we can think of the arts as illustrating Scripture, and this is an important function; but the arts can also communicate something about God with and beyond words. In a secular context where many people aren't much interested in the Bible or theology, moreover, the arts are particularly important, continuing to speak to people's search for the spiritual.

James MacMillan, who joined ITIA three years ago, believes that 'music is the most spiritual of the arts.' We launched our first TheoArtistry project in 2016, therefore, with a call for composers. The composers didn't have to be religious, just open to engage with scriptures and theology. Nearly 100 applied, of whom we chose six, linking each in partnership with a doctoral theologian. We also shared our own research with the composers, James mentored them, and we had workshops and discussions.

For the TheoArtistry Composers' Scheme, we took the theme of annunciations – moments in Scripture when God directly communicates to individuals – and chose six Old Testament passages, including the

burning bush (Exodus 3) and the calling of Samuel (1 Samuel 3). These dramatic episodes of divine encounter ignited the composers' creativity, and led to original textures of choral music conveying different aspects of the divine.

Alongside the composers scheme, we also wanted to show how an appreciation of the theological engagement and/or profound spirituality of composers can influence not only the creation of music, but that music's performance and reception. Where historically informed performance (HIP) focuses

people are trying to communicate through music.' The CD we made [Annunciations, launched in the spring of 2018] has the six new compositions as well as pieces by James MacMillan and his contemporaries, and aims to take people on a spiritual journey.

The composers' scheme was our first TheoArtistry project; we've since done a project with StAnza (Scotland's international poetry festival), linking six theologians with six poets, and we're currently planning a project with film makers. Our aim is to put the search for the spiritual, which has historically characterised the arts, back at

The arts can communicate something about God with and beyond words

almost exclusively on style, we wanted to encourage theologically informed programming and performance (TIPP).

For me, music has always been about the meaning of life in a very profound way; yet some of the dialogue about music has been just about notes on a page, performing them in an exactly correct style way, turning it into a sort of cultural commodity. TIPP is saying, 'Let's get to the heart of what

the centre of culture – we feel it has been pushed quite aggressively to the sidelines, to the detriment of art-making. The arts engage with our deepest realities and also with the central mysteries of existence: the mysteries of love, of death, and of the encounter with the divine itself.

George Corbett, Senior Lecturer in Theology and the Arts, University of St Andrews

▼ James MacMillan leads a composers' workshop on the TheoArtistry project



OLIVIA WALKER

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▼ The Really Big Chorus, at the end of a performance in Birmingham Town Hall



TONY HASTINGS



▲ The baroque staircase in front of Bom Jesus de Monte has become a 'brand image' for Portuguese ensemble Cupertinos

Stairway to heaven

A decade after the global financial crash, the cry still on many lips is 'Can any good come from banks?' **Rebecca Tavener** visits a Portuguese early music group that would not exist but for these institutions. IMAGES COURTESY CUPERTINOS

Oscar Wilde observed, 'When bankers get together for dinner, they discuss art' – an idea that evokes names like Medici, Rothschild, and Rockefeller. A name that may not come so readily to mind is António Cupertino de Miranda, the visionary teacher and journalist who launched a cultural foundation in 1964 in Porto, using shares in a Portuguese bank to finance its not-for-profit activities, aimed at increasing public awareness of their own culture. The Foundation, having survived major

vicissitudes including the collapse of the original bank and vast political upheaval, is a symbol of the tenacity and determination of its trustees and directors, not least that of the current incumbent.

Visiting its purpose-built premises, one is immediately struck by the architecture, the modern art collection, the fostering of Portuguese literature and, of course, the adjacent bank. Music is a recent development, however, driven by the vision of the Foundation's director, Pedro Álvares Ribeiro (a bank employee working

for the arts 'pro bono') – not himself a musician but a man on a mission, a profoundly cultured person dedicated to Portuguese art in all its forms. The creation of a professional vocal ensemble for the Foundation was Ribeiro's dream and, while he's reluctant to admit it, this was his cherished idea. But how can you produce an ensemble of high standard in a nation without a cathedral choral tradition, choir schools, and all the professional choral activities we take for granted in the UK? People told him that it couldn't be done. ►

International Festival of Portuguese Polyphony

What do you do when you've launched an early music vocal consort where none was before and have a vast range of fabulous historic venues and a magical repertoire to perform in them? Why, found a festival, of course!

The International Festival of Portuguese Polyphony was launched by the Cupertino de Miranda Foundation in 2011 with the aim of promoting Portuguese music from the 16th and 17th centuries, but also to disseminate knowledge of the history and architecture associated with that music. By 2018 and the eighth festival, it had become a firm part of the Foundation's annual programme. It is also a project that enhances civic pride in Porto and surrounding towns and cities, with support from local authorities such as the municipalities of Famalicão, Braga, Amarante, Guimarães, Vila do Conde, Arouca, and others. In Aveiro, the mayor – another civic supporter-cum-fan – stepped straight off a flight from Iran and, without having slept, went directly to the performance.

In September 2018, the programme marked the 400th anniversary of the death of Pedro di Cristo and, as one might expect, the festival was centred upon performances by Cupertino. Concerts were spread across two long weekends featuring three

programmes in eight venues: one entirely a cappella, one with the excellent early wind quartet Capella Sanctae Crucis, and one with guest organist Ludger Lohmann. Inviting an organ star has become a feature of the festival and previous visiting organists include Pieter van Dijk, James O'Donnell, John Butt, Maurizio Croce, Andrés Cea Galán, and Claudio Astronio. Other previous guest ensembles and instrumentalists include the Ludovice Ensemble, Juan Carlos Rivera (guitar), and Arianna Savall (harp). The 2018 collaboration with Capella Sanctae Crucis will hopefully lead to more.

Academic research is an important element, with each festival hosting a seminar at Coimbra University in the evocative surroundings of the Chapter House. 2018 included papers ranging in subject from the messages and use of bells to the pipe organ in sacred spaces in the 17th and 18th centuries, and to 'Singing with Grace', concerning the singing canons of Coimbra and vocal ornamentation, beautifully illustrated with live examples from members of Cupertino. Guided visits with experts describing the art, architecture and history of each venue enhance the experience (for Portuguese speakers) and in Coimbra this consisted of an illustrated lecture on the construction and mechanism

of the organ. A lavishly illustrated, glossy, weighty souvenir book (carrying a full set home in hand luggage was a challenge) with exalted production values documents each festival.

With Foundation staff stretched to the limits and events being free, 'front-of-house' is minimal. A discussion about selling tickets or inviting donations and sponsorship must, surely, be indicated. It will also take time to build an audience that fully understands the etiquette of listening and respect for performers and music. Maybe I shouldn't mention the sequence of collapsing plastic garden chairs in one former monastery venue (and the incursion by a bat, shocked into a frenzy by the sonorities and turning increasingly acrobatic loops just over the heads of an anxious audience), but it feels like a metaphor for this 'hand-knitted' aspect of the enterprise.

There is so much here to admire and applaud – if the fame of the group and the festival grow (and the marketing of both needs dedicated energy), this may ensure that concerts will be appreciated by an audience of *cognoscenti* who have deliberately travelled across borders, joining the bedazzled locals and tourists who chance upon it serendipitously as something 'rich and strange'.

▼ Promoting Portuguese music from the renaissance and baroque periods: Cupertino





▲ Concerts make use of historic organs

◁ Ten years on, Ribeiro's dream has become reality with the development of a Portuguese 'super-group': initially called Cappella Musical Cupertino de Miranda, they are now, realistically, renamed 'Cupertinos' as they prepare to become much more widely known with the release of their debut CD, and a contract for two more, on the Hyperion label. To justify this dream while satisfying the Foundation's aims required a true cultural purpose, of course, and just up the road there are vast, hitherto largely untapped resources of Portuguese polyphony in the library of the University of Coimbra. There was a time when interest in Portuguese polyphony was usually met with a dismissive statement: 'Oh, so much was destroyed in the Lisbon earthquake of 1755', without being directed to other centres of Portuguese culture and learning. Coimbra's library is now giving up its secrets to musicologists, and Cupertinos is performing and recording material that largely consists of 'world premieres in modern times.'

Here is 'normal' group evolution in reverse, the antithesis of our Oxbridge/London-centric 'system' in which new groups spring up like mushrooms before entering a Darwinian struggle for survival. Here we find an ensemble deliberately created in a vacuum, like the selective breeding by a connoisseur of a new camellia

or racehorse, and it took time to find the right formula.

The core group of eight singers (expanding to ten or more, as required) is directed from within by tenor Luís Toscano, appointed with percipience by Ribeiro and persuaded into leadership on the understanding that he could continue in the dual singer-director role. His experience with groups such as Theatre of Voices, Ars Nova Copenhagen and the Brabant Ensemble has been invaluable. He is also a developing musicologist, currently completing a PhD at Coimbra University with the title 'The Book of Vespers of Santa Cruz of Coimbra: context, study, critical edition and performance approach', under the supervision of José Abreu. Toscano made the editions of Manuel Cardoso for the Cupertinos debut CD, and also the editions of numerous works by Pedro de Cristo, performed this year to mark the 400th anniversary of his death.

Toscano has a high work ethic and focus on quality. He wears his considerable scholarship lightly and is a person of great thoughtfulness, calm, expertise and humility. His leadership of the group is marked by a gentle but firm authority: he grew with them, as it were, and the relationship is collegial. His colleagues are all fairly local and, besides technical expertise as professional classical singers,

there is a fascinating range of experience in the group, from jazz and children's music to opera. Auditions are held in rehearsal and existing members have a say. Democracy is quite a feature, with Toscano also inviting their input in editorial matters: discussions of *ficta* and underlay, for example, occur after he has sent out sample pages of new editions for their perusal.

The Foundation promotes a monthly concert for which three or four rehearsal sessions are held. Including the annual festival, Cupertinos gives around 20 concerts a year in a magnificent range of north Portuguese venues. Porto and its environs are richly studded with architectural jewels and Pedro Álvares Ribeiro is a complete enthusiast for their unique qualities, choosing the baroque staircase of Bom Jesus de Monte as a 'brand image' for Cupertinos: this artistic synergy is an essential element of the Foundation's support.

There is an enviable continuity enabled by the Foundation staff, who needed to be won over initially because they would be taking on the administrative duties and technical support for this new venture on top of their normal work. They are true fans today, dedicated and committed, providing all kinds of back-up including roadie duties, throwing themselves into the project with impressive enthusiasm. ▷



▲ Tenor Luís Toscano has a dual role as singer and director of the ensemble, but also invites their input in editorial and performance issues



◀ There's a kind of benign artistic tension between the Foundation's aim to promote art and architecture together with the music, and the group's natural desire to sound at their best wherever they sing. The group is no sonic clone of more venerable ensembles, producing as they do a truly Portuguese sound for Portuguese music: they use the word 'untamed' in their biography and I relished that vocal quality, wanting more of the vocal grain of their fully released sound, particularly in venues with unsatisfactory acoustics. The exquisitely complex gilded wood of the Portuguese baroque, an eye-poppingly attractive feature of the region's sacred spaces, absorbs sound and the singers describe performing in such places as 'fighting the wood'. This is where expert external ears would be helpful in rehearsal, encouraging a greater release of the voice in spaces where vocal subtlety is unworkable. For the CD, the Foundation wisely appointed Adrian Peacock as producer, and Cupertinos will have benefited hugely from his observations.

They perform mostly to a local and tourist audience which appears, as yet, like a desert receiving rain, absorbing 'new' sounds and responding with rapture to everything. Leading the audience into greater knowledge and appreciation of the nation's hidden musical treasures is one of the Foundation's aims, as well as promoting new editions in association with Coimbra University. The University also offers Cupertinos a perfect performing space in the form of

the Church of Sancta Crucis, potentially a spiritual and intellectual home *par excellence*.

It was there that Pedro de Cristo (c.1550-1618) lived and worked (and died after falling down the stairs in the cloister when late for Mass – a certain gruesome enjoyment was taken in showing me the spot where he met his end), and many of his works are still to be transcribed and edited. The quality of his polyphony is delightful and it was a particular pleasure to hear his works of Marian devotion, including the *Missa Salve Regina*.

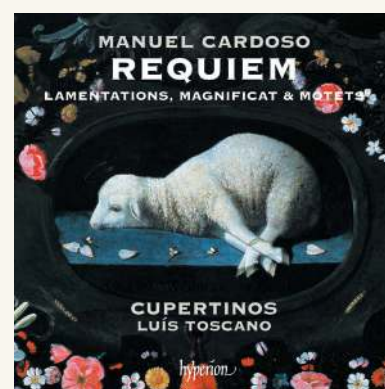
Cupertinos chose Manuel Cardoso for their first CD (his *Missa Defunctorum* for four voices – see review, p.88) and took a huge step of faith by making the recording before entering into a relationship with a label. Hyperion snapped it up and has invited them to make two further recordings, the next being of Duarte Lobo's Christmas Responsories; the third is yet to be decided, but here's hoping that it will be dedicated to Pedro de Cristo.

While Portuguese polyphony may be their USP, there is much related material to reveal. Brazil, for example, should offer an exciting opportunity to explore the sacred music repertoire of the earliest colonial cathedrals. Although this is not a priority for the Foundation, other promoters have commissioned contemporary music for Cupertinos. It is to be hoped that they continue to explore the interface between the very old and very new, and reap the artistic benefits. They have launched at an important time: early music has become mainstream and options for performance-

practice have broadened, offering not only an opportunity to create their own unique sound/approach but also to market the group abroad.

Cultural tourists exploring Europe (not so much in the UK) see very clearly how banks have supported the arts in the good times. For now, let's hope that Cupertinos, who know how fortunate they are, can continue to enjoy the enviable support of the Foundation. Their live events are free, but at least their CDs will mean they can begin merchandising and may mark the beginning of developing an income stream – because, as the rest of the Wilde quotation goes, 'When artists get together for dinner, they discuss money'. ■

Rebecca Tavener is a singer and director specialising in early and contemporary music. She is founder-director of Canty, Scotland's only professional medieval music group.



Manuel Cardoso: *Requiem* featuring Cupertinos is to be released on the Hyperion label in January [CDA 68252].

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Nativitie
Daniel Riley

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arr. Daniel Brinsmead

In dulci jubilo BWV 729
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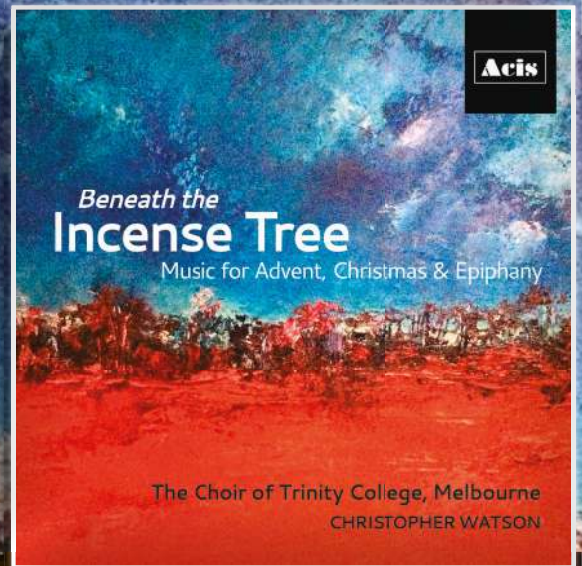
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▲ The 1776 Hinsz organ in Harlingen is cloaked in a case richly decorated in classical style by Johann Georg Hempel

Getting a fix

Chris Bragg considers the issues raised by the restoration of two organs by the 18th-century Hamburg builder Albertus Anthoni Hinsz. PHOTOS BY CHRIS BRAGG

It is testament to the much-lauded genius of Arp Schnitger that the direct line of his organ-building descendants in the Netherlands continued to construct monumental instruments of such striking quality despite both Schnitger himself, and the Hamburg school which so impressed Bach in his youth, being long dead. Schnitger's passing, during the construction of the famous Zwolle organ in 1719, allowed his sons, Johann Georg and more especially Frans Caspar, to garner their own fame; having made a success of the organ in Zwolle, the latter was to ensure his own legacy through the audacious rebuilding of the Van Hagerbeer organ at Alkmaar.

Shortly thereafter, in 1728, another Hamburg organ builder, Albertus Anthoni Hinsz (1704-85), arrived in Groningen and a year later was commissioned to complete the ongoing restoration of the Martinikerk organ following the death of Frans Caspar. The commission itself came from F.C. Schnitger's widow, whom Hinsz subsequently married. Hinsz's own training remains somewhat shrouded in mystery, the workshop of Schnitger pupil Otto Richborn often cited as a likely location.

In comparison to both father and son Schnitger, Hinsz's career was remarkably long and prolific. Indeed, so well represented is his work to this day, that I was recently

able to visit a pair of very substantial organs just miles apart, in the Friesian towns of Harlingen and Bolsward, both dating from deep into the second half of the 18th century and both having recently undergone substantial restorations by Flentrop. These restorations in themselves followed differing trajectories reflecting how, during the 19th century, the Schnitger tradition was set forth, in the case of the organ at Bolsward (1781), and was rudely interrupted, in the case of the organ at Harlingen (1776).

The visual similarity between the two organs is immediately apparent and follows a pattern evident throughout Hinsz's career from his earliest organs such as that at

Grote Kerk, Harlingen

ALBERTUS ANTHONI HINSZ (1776); PETRUS VAN OECKELEN (1864);

J. DE KOFF (1938); FLENTROP ORGELBOUW (2001, 2010/11)

MANUAAL

54 notes

Gedakt	16 (Mostly 1776, some pipes 2001/2010)
Prestant	8 (I-II All bar 11 pipes, 1776)
Baarpijp	8 (1776)
Holpijp	8 (1776)
Octaaf	4 (1776)
Spitsfluit	4 (2010)
Quint	3 (2010)
Octaaf	2 (All bar one pipe, 1776)
Woudfluit	2 (1776)
Mixtuur	IV-V-VI (49 pipes from 2010, remainder, 1776)
Cornet (treble)	III (1776/2010)
Trompet	16 (2011, originally Fagot)
Trompet	8 (2011)
Voxhumana	8 (2011)

RUGPOSITIEF

54 notes

Holpijp	8 (1776)
Quintadeen	8 (2010)
Prestant	4 (All bar two pipes, 1776)
Fluit	4 (1776)
Nassat	3 (2010)
Octaaf	2 (All bar 18 pipes, 1776)

Speelfluit	2 (1776)
Sexquialter	II-IV (2010)
Scherp	III-IV (2010 (20 pipes from 1776)
Dulciaan	8 (2011)

PEDAAL

27 notes

Bordon	16 (1776, 1864, 2010)
Prestant	8 (1776)
Gedakt	8 (1776)
Quint	6 (Hardorff 1855/ De Koff 1938)
Octaaf	4 (1776)
Nagthoorn	2 (1776)
Bazuin	16 (2011)
Trompet	8 (2011)
Schalmey	4 (2011)
Cornet	2 (2011)

Accessories

Couplers: Inter-manual 'shove' coupler; Manuaal-Pedaal
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Wind pressure: 70mm
Pitch: A = 415 Hz
Tuning: Neidhardt III 'for a large city'

Composition of compound stops

Cornet

5-8-10 throughout

Mixtuur IV-V-VI

CC 19-22-26-29

C13 15-17-19-22

C25 8-10-12-15-19

C37 5-8-10-12-15-15

Sexquialter II-IV

C 12-17

C25 12-15-15-17

Scherp III-IV

CC 26-29-33

C13 22-26-29

C25 15-19-22-26

C37 8-12-15-19

Advisers to the most recent restorations: Jan Jongepier (2001), Cees van der Poel (2011)

Grote of Martinikerk, Bolsward

ALBERTUS ANTHONI HINSZ (1781); LAMBERTUS VAN DAM II (1861); D.A. FLENTROP (1955);

FLENTROP ORGELBOUW (2016)

HOOFDWERK

54 notes

Holpijp	16 (1781)
Prestant	8 (1781)
Baarpijp	8 (1781)
Holpijp	8 (1781)
Octaaf	4 (1781)
Spitsfluit	4 (1781)
Quint	3 (1781)
Octaaf	2 (1781)
Woudfluit	2 (1781)
Cornet (treble)	III (1781)
Mixtuur	IV-V-VI (1781)
Trompet	16 (1781)
Trompet	8 (1781)
Vox Humana	8 (1781/2016)

RUGWERK

54 notes

Prestant	8 (1781)
Fluit Douce	8 (1781)
Octaaf	4 (1781)
Fluit	4 (1781)
Nasard	3 (1781)
Octaaf	2 (1781)
Speelfluit	2 (1781)
Sexquialter	II-III (1781/1861/1955)
Scherp	III-IV (1955)
Dulciaan	8 (1781)

BOVENWERK

54 notes

Salicionaal	8 (1781/1861)
Viola di Gamba	8 (1861)
Roerfluit	8 (1861)
Salicet	4 (1861)
Fluit Travers	4 (1861)
Quintfluit	3 (1861)
Nachthoorn	2 (1861)
Clarinet	8 (1861)

PEDAAL

27 notes

Prestant	16 (1781/1861)
Bourdon	16 (1781/1861)
Octaaf	8 (1781)
Gedekt	8 (1781)
Roerquint	6 (early 19th century?)
Octaaf	4 (1781)
Nachthoorn	2 (1781)
Bazuin	16 (1781)
Trompet	8 (1781)
Schalmei	4 (1781)

Accessories

Couplers: Hoofdwerk to Rugwerk, Bovenwerk to Hoofdwerk, Rugwerk to Pedaal
Tremulant to whole organ (2016), Tremulant to Bovenwerk (1861), Tremulant to Rugwerk (2016)

Cut-out valves ('afsluiters') to Hoofdwerk, Bovenwerk, Rugwerk, Pedaal
Six wedge bellows, manually operable
a = 415 Hz
Wind pressure: 70mm
Pitch: Equal temperament

Composition of compound stops

Mixtuur IV-V-VI

CC 15-17-19-22

C25 8-10-12-15-15

C37 5-8-10-10-12-12

Cornet

8-10-12 throughout

Sexquialter II-III

CC 19-22

C13 12-33

C25 12-15-17

Scherp III-IV

CC 22-26-29

C13 19-22-26

C25 12-15-19-19

C37 8-12-12-15

Adviser to the last restoration: Aart Bergwerff

◀ Leens (1734) to his last at Uithuizermeeden (1785). Most notable are the pedal towers with their bases at impost level rather than parallel to the foot of the Rückpositiv, as had been common in Hamburg, and the elevation of the main division somewhat higher with the suggestion of the Brustwerk underneath. The Zwolle organ was surely the blueprint here.

At Harlingen, the unusual visual verisimilitude is the result of the organ dating from the construction period of the church itself. This was completed, to the designs of city architects Eelke Jelles and Willem Douwes, in time for a dedicatory service on New Year's Day 1775, and is a model of Calvinist intent: small footprint, high ceiling, three floors of benches, one above the other on three sides of the church, focusing the faithful's attention solely on the Word, both spoken (pulpit) and sung (organ). The organ's rococo decoration comes from the same hand as the pulpit below, that of Johann Georg Hempel.

The organ underwent more drastic alterations than many of its Dutch peers. The most significant took place in 1864 at the hand of Petrus van Oeckelen (1792-1878). Van Oeckelen, a fine organ

builder in his own right, was atypical of his 19th-century northern Dutch peers: an outsider, originating from Breda in north Brabant, and with limited sympathy for the Groningen/Hamburg style of organ building. At Harlingen, in addition to the raising of both pitch and wind pressure, the doubled rank of the Prestant 8ft of the Hoofdwark was silenced, tuning slots added to other flue ranks, the mixture reduced in size. More significantly, the Rugpositief's upperwork made way for new 8ft and 4ft

alterations, the Manuaal and Pedal reeds were all, once again, replaced, this time with factory stops supplied by Giesecke. The Calcodion, peculiarly enough, survived.

In nearby Bolsward, meanwhile, Hinsz completed a new organ of two manuals and 34 stops on the west gallery of the large medieval church in 1781. Conceptually the organ was remarkably similar, the only obvious difference being the presence of an 8ft Rugwerk. Compared with their Hamburg antecedents and Hinsz's earlier

One encounters in both organs a darker, less brilliant, mature style

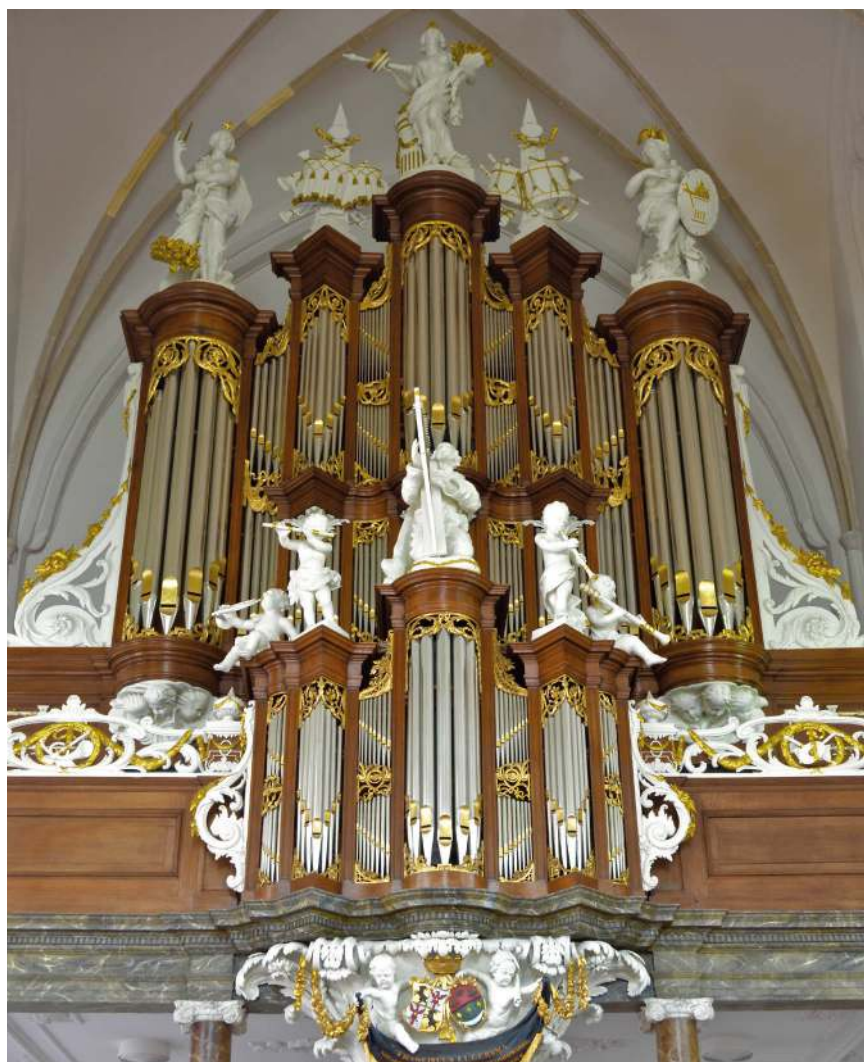
colour stops including a Violon, Viola di Gamba and a 4ft Salicionaal. The organ's reeds were replaced entirely, the newcomers including the exotically named free-reed 'Calcodion'. Such was the quality of Van Oeckelen's work that the organ might now have been preserved in its evolved form (former Flentrop managing director Frits Elshout notes that the cut-ups and languids were hardly changed) were it not for a further intervention by the Utrecht builder De Koff in 1938. Among numerous other

instruments (such as the much 'shoutier' village organ at Leens), one encounters in both organs a darker, less brilliant, mature style. In both, the Hoofdwark mixture contains both 16ft quint and tierce (Hinsz varied the compositions of his mixtures in virtually every new organ); the cornets, likewise, are based on the 16ft series. The Hoofdwarks of both organs include a pair of conical flutes.

The key 19th-century intervention in Bolsward, however, led to a very different ▶

▼ The console at Harlingen has been returned to the situation of 1776





▲ The Hinsz/Van Dam organ in Bolsward sits on the west gallery of the large, medieval church

◀ outcome from that in Harlingen. While Petrus van Oeckelen had come from a geographically distant organ building tradition, Lambertus van Dam II (1823-1904) was the third generation of his family to build (often substantial) organs in the north-east since 1779. His grandfather had learned the trade from Hinsz and was involved in the construction of the organ at Harlingen. The organs from the house of Van Dam would remain magnificently, doggedly conservative throughout the 19th century and beyond. At Bolsward some revoicing undoubtedly occurred; the organ is darker than one might expect. The most obvious newcomer came in the form of a third manual, in the Bovenwerk position, consisting, like the Dutch city organs of 200 years earlier, largely of flutes and with a single, fractional length (and in this

instance, free) reed. Its Salicionaal includes pipes from the former doubling rank of the Hoofdwerk Prestant. Although without a plenum, from its position high under the church's ceiling, the Bovenwerk's presence is substantial downstairs. The only material change to be made to the organ's stoplist was the replacement of the Rugwerk's Sexquialter with a cornet; no suggestion then of the replacement of reeds or of other intrusions. In 1947, De Koff submitted a similar plan to the one carried out at Harlingen (including replacement of the reeds) but this, thankfully, was rejected and Flentrop's subsequent 1955 restoration was conservative by the standards of the day, removing a swell box and pneumatically operated celeste added by Bakker and Timmenga in 1918.

Despite the obvious parallels in the

organs' stories, somewhat different courses of action were adopted when the time came for recent major work. Both organs had evolved; one organically, one less so. 'In Bolsward, Van Dam created a musical unity,' says Frits Elshout, 'in Harlingen the organ was a victim of its own history.' In Bolsward, the organ was carefully documented, the six bellows restored (only two had been in use). The reed tongues, dating from 1955, were too thin (striving, no doubt, for 'clarity') and have been replaced with examples more in keeping with Hinsz's practice. The 1955 resonators of the Vox Humana likewise departed the scene. The case was stabilised and restored while the keyboards were meticulously repaired and a redundant historic pedalboard by Hinsz-pupil Matthijs Hardoff (1745-1802) utilised, occupying the gap vacated by the modern pedalboard introduced in 1955. Most significantly, the wind pressure has been reduced to 70mm (higher than the documented original pressure of 65mm but significantly lower than recorded when the organ was initially documented); by all accounts the unity of the sound has gained immensely as a consequence. The addition of desired extra pedal couplers was ruled out as a result of the implied damage to the original action. Originally coupling the Hoofdwerk keyboard to the Pedal, the rollerboard now couples down the Rugwerk, the addition of the third manual in 1861 having prompted the exchange of the Rugwerk and Hoofdwerk keyboards, with the former now occupying the lowest position.

If the operation at Bolsward was a restoration with an emphasis on conserving an evolved state, Harlingen called for more substantial intervention. With so little of Van Oeckelen's material having survived De Koff's rebuilding of the organ, the choice was made to return the organ to its 1776 situation. The reconstruction was carried out in two phases. In 2001, the technical phase of the project was completed; the organ survives with its original cases, keyboards, winding system, wind-chests and action largely intact. The subsequent tonal restoration had to wait a further 10 years and was the result of considerable puzzling and research. While 17 original stops remained intact, other original pipes – partly from compound

stops replaced in 1864, others reracked and rehomed by De Koff – remained scattered throughout the instrument. Analysis of the pipe inscriptions and note-channel numbers inked onto the languids during an overhaul by Hinsz pupil Van Gruisen in 1815 led to discoveries about various pipes' original locations and the composition of the compound stops (including that 16ft Cornet). Van Oeckelen, for example, reused the highest octave of Hinsz's 4ft Prestant (Rugpositief) in his 4ft Salicionaal; likewise, certain pipes from the original doubled rank of the 8ft Manuaal Prestant surfaced both in this organ, and in Van Oeckelen's organ at Tolbert (1867). Closing of later-introduced tuning slots resulted in a pitch of $a = 415\text{Hz}$ without having to resort to any changes in the cut-ups.

The eight reeds had, of course, to be entirely reconstructed. The model was provided by Hinsz's organ at Midwolda (1772) although, when that organ's pitch was restored to the original 'kamerton' in 1974, no parallel lengthening of the resonators had taken place, so allowances were obligatory. The Trompet 16ft of the Manuaal was copied from Bolsward and proved later to be a luxury unknown to the

Harlingers of 1776; the discovery of the original contract revealed this to have been a Fagot. The reeds follow Schnitger's pattern of wooden blocks and boots with closed shallots in the bass, their pipe metal cast on sand as Hinsz would have. The outstanding results, purring and rich, are testament to the brilliance of Frits Elshout, whose long-admired skills as a reed voicer have since generated admiration at the Royal College of Music in London. As a whole, the reconstructed organ represents a significant achievement, a bold, sophisticated and, above all, elegant representative of the post-Schnitger school in a fine acoustical environment. Bolsward, meanwhile, retains a sheen of 19th-century tonal varnish, though qualified by the extreme conservatism of 19th-century Dutch organ building in general.

Incidentally, the people of Bergen op Zoom in the opposite corner of the Netherlands also had reason to rejoice in the Harlingen restoration when the time came for their 1864 Ibach organ to be reconstructed in 2011 (see *Choir & Organ* September/October 2016) ... for they were the lucky recipients of the enigmatic Calcodion. ■

Bibliography

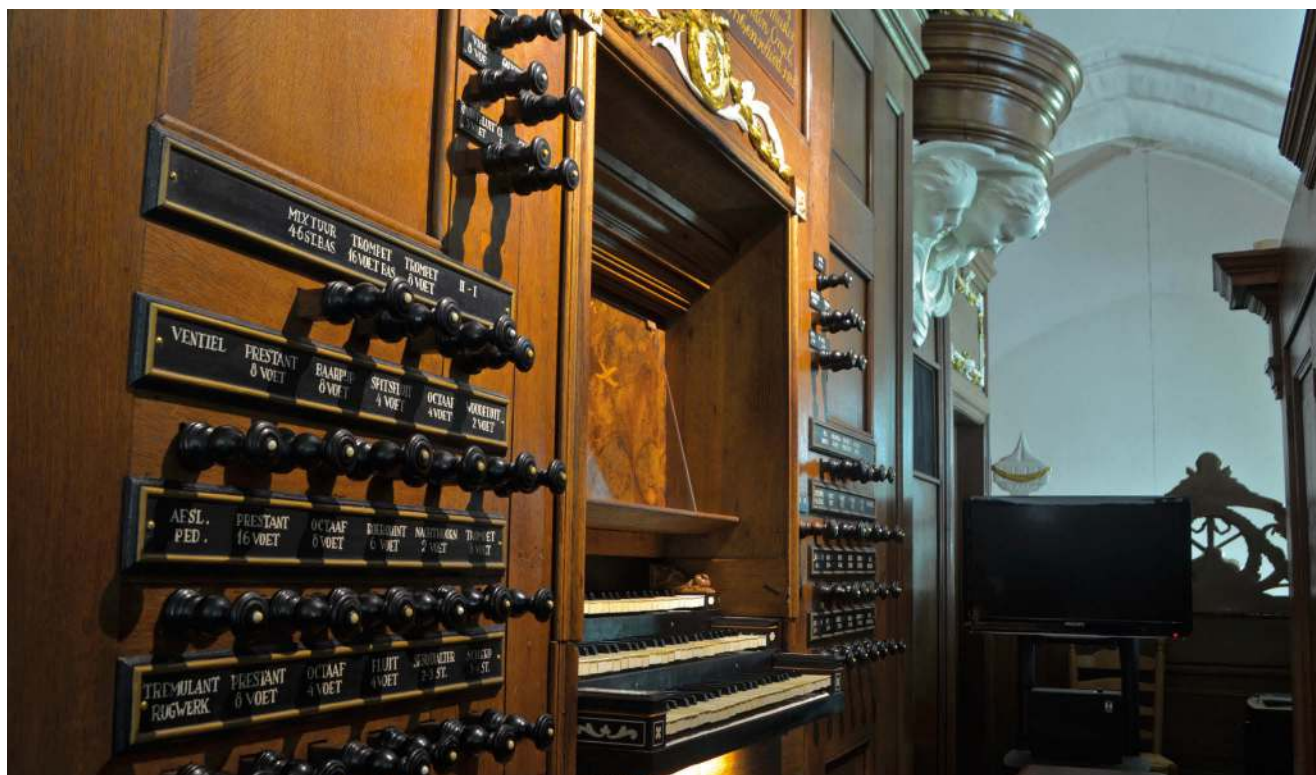
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3. Ed Cees de Rouwe, *Een Orgel in de Steigers* (College Ouderling Kerkrentmeesters Martini-gemeente Bolsward, 2016).
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Thanks to:

Frits Elshout, for answering in detail various technical questions;
Ross Luescher and Jan Spijker (Flentrop) for confirming certain details.

Chris Bragg studied organ at the former RSAMD, and the Conservatories of Amsterdam and Utrecht. He is head of programming at the University of St Andrews Music Centre and artistic director of St Andrews Organ Week as well as a freelance organist, teacher, writer and translator.

▼ The console at Bolsward with the stops for Van Dam's Bovenwerk located high to either side of the music desk



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MATT DUNPHY

▲ Composer Melissa Dunphy: 'I write what I know'

Bridge passage

Australian-born composer Melissa Dunphy knows what it is to change career, country, and compositional style. She talks to **Philip Barnes** about what motivates her choral works, and how she tries to open boundaries of music to the next generation

Crossover musicians are nothing new, but they remain a fascination for a public prone to placing artists in narrow categories. We are interested, even surprised, to learn that a performer adept in one genre can achieve success in another: think of Sting recording songs by John Dowland, or Thomas Quasthoff swapping Schubert *lieder* for jazz. In this vein the Australian-American musician Melissa Dunphy presents a dizzying array of talent, ranging from modelling to classical composition, from performance (on the viola) to acting (acclaimed at the Philadelphia Fringe). She also performs in a rock band with the risqué name Up Your Cherry, and recently has added construction to her resumé, restoring a

theatre in an 18th-century building where she uncovered archeological remains of national significance.

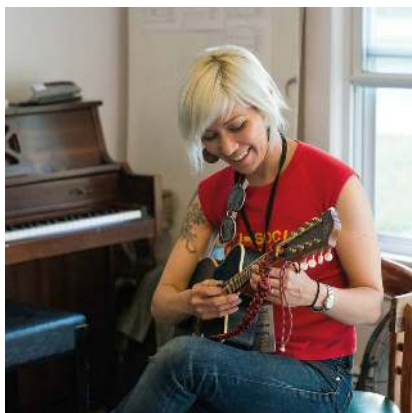
Dunphy's choral compositions reveal a pronounced sensitivity to the voices available, the text, and occasion for the new work. Although her training is academic, culminating in a Benjamin Franklin Fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania where she earned a doctorate, there is nothing of the 'ivory tower' about her. Indeed, her first piece to earn widespread recognition was an overtly political work in support of equal marriage: *What Do You Think I Fought For At Omaha Beach?* sets testimony given to the Maine Senate by a veteran of the second world war, Phillip Spooner, in which he asks for his gay

son to be accorded the same rights as his straight brothers. This piece won Dunphy first prize in a competition organised by the Simon Carrington Chamber Singers in Kansas City; it has subsequently been recorded by the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus, and performed widely in the US, in both its original mixed voices version and an arrangement made for male voice chorus. A similarly topical work that gained recognition was *The Gonzales Cantata*, in which Dunphy took public testimony by former attorney general Alberto Gonzales, and used his own words as an indictment of policies under president George W. Bush.

Composing, explains Dunphy, is like any kind of writing: 'The best work is created when the author is truly passionate about

MELISSA DUNPHY

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BRUCE LENGACHER



▲ Composer, rock singer, professional violist, pedagogue: some of the many faces of Melissa Dunphy

While Melissa Dunphy has used her gifts in the service of her political beliefs, they do not limit or define her creativity, as a series of subsequent works attests. The three works she wrote for the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus while its composer-in-residence confirm this: scored for unaccompanied double choir, their titles are *Alpha and Omega*, *The Day of Resurrection*, and *Suite Remembrance*. Complementing such double-SATB works are a handful of highly atmospheric settings of the activist poet Lola Ridge, written for several Californian women's ensembles. More recently, Dunphy has contributed to a programme of new Advent antiphons given by the Choral Arts Society of Philadelphia: her *O Oriens* has received numerous performances by groups on both sides of the Atlantic. However, her first UK commission came not from a church choir, but the male voice ensemble Opus Anglicanum, who asked for a new piece – *The Elements of the Sun Broke into Song* – to present at the Two Moors Festival in 2016.

The summer of 2018 saw the first performance of a major choral work, *American DREAMers*, that set the words of five immigrants brought to the US as children. It was performed first in the Episcopal cathedral of Philadelphia by PhilHarmonia, and subsequently in Portland, Oregon, by the Resonance Ensemble. Lasting 24 minutes, it is scored for unaccompanied singers, and may be heard via Dunphy's website (where most of her music is available as PDFs.)

Choral works like these are a response to her enthusiasm to work with singers and vocal conductors, whom she finds 'the most generous and adventurous collaborators and performers. The sense of camaraderie within and between choral groups is unmatched; I'm constantly telling other composers that if they work with choirs, their music will self-propagate as it spreads through choral networks; and choirs seem far more willing to commission new music and invest in musical risks than their instrumental counterparts.'

Following *A New Heart*, a short anthem for SAB and piano written for the Third Baptist Church Choir in St Louis, she recently completed *If Thou Wilt Be Perfect* for St Peter's Episcopal Church, Ladue,

◁ the subject at hand, which is why so many of my compositions are inspired by extra-musical topics that inflame me in some way, such as political movements. Like many authors, I follow the maxim to "write what I know", so even when I am given a text to set, I make sure that I know exactly what I want the work to say and why I need to say it.

'The puzzle is how to employ notes on a page to reach that objective. Music is a language; melodies, harmonies, rhythms and timbres mean things, sometimes

extremely specific things, and one of the attractions of vocal and choral writing is the interaction between the meaning of the text and the meaning of the music. I can completely change the meaning of a word in a text by changing its musical delivery: I can fill a banal text with emotion, undercut earnest words with irony, or make a complicated sentiment seem childishly straightforward; I can juxtapose texts and melodies against each other to deepen their meanings and draw connections.'

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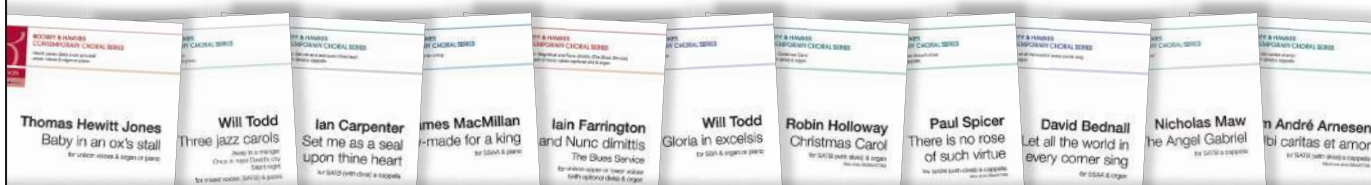
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BOOSEY & HAWKES

Enigma with an unbroken code

Jongen's *Chant de May*, premiered 100 years ago, continues to puzzle organists in terms of both performance and title. **John Scott Whiteley** takes a fresh look at the evidence



CATHÉDRALE ST-PAUL, LIÈGE ARCHIVES MUSICALES

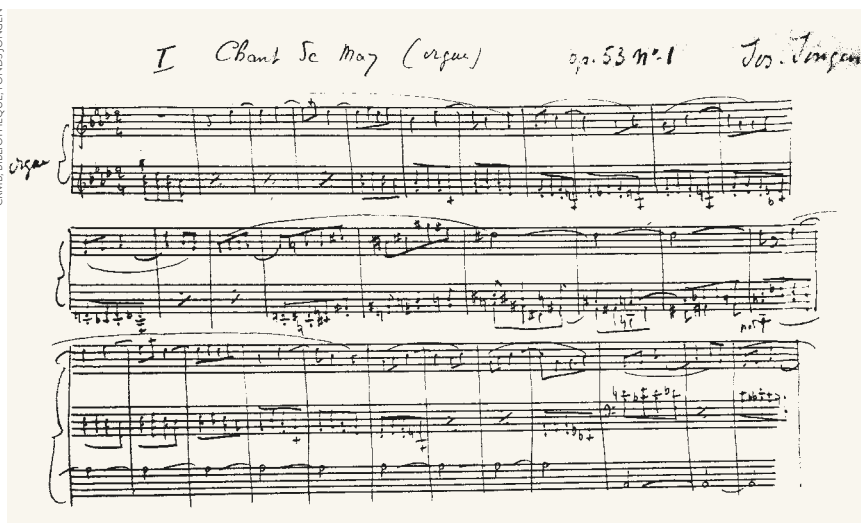
On 1 January 1919 a concert of violin and organ music took place at the church of St Stephen, Bournemouth. The performers included the organist of the church, Henry Holloway,¹ and an exiled Belgian, the *grand compositeur*² who had spent the four-and-a-half years of the first world war as a refugee in London and Bournemouth, Joseph Jongen.³ The programme listed a number of organ solo items shared between Holloway and Jongen, whose own contribution consisted of two pieces he had written while in England: *Prélude élégiaque*, op.47 no.1, and *Chant de May*, op.53 no.1.⁴ The *Prélude* was included in deference to the mourning that then surrounded them, and the *Chant de May* as a contrasting haven of optimism, 'given with great charm and delicacy'.⁵

Jongen played the *Chant de May* in most of his recitals after he had written it in April 1917. The 37 diaries of Lucy Broadwood⁶ recall, for instance, that on 3 September 1917:

[we went] to the R.C. church to hear ... the 'admirable' Juliette Folville⁷ ... play her violin accompd. on the organ by Mr Joseph Jongsens [sic] – Liège organist and very best Belgian composer of the younger generation. ... Mr Jongsens played César Franck's third organ Choral etc. etc.

The newly-composed *Chant de May* was almost certainly included and was repeated at another recital Jongen gave at that same ►

◀ Jongen during the 1890s, at the time when he began to play the organ



▲ (left) Her Serene Highness Princess May of Teck (1906-94) wearing the enamelled star pendant given to her by King Edward VII; (right) Jongen's pencil autograph of the *Chant de May*

◀ church – Sacred Heart, Richmond Hill, Bournemouth – on 27 December 1917.⁸ Having returned to Belgium after the war, Jongen was later appointed director of the Brussels Conservatoire. When he occasionally appeared as organ soloist in concerts there he would programme the *Chant de May*, and in his farewell recital at the Conservatoire on 12 January 1945 he played it in a suite of three pieces: *Chant de May*, *Menuet-Scherzo* and *Toccata*.⁹ In America, this ‘fanciful and effective piece [with its opening] theme suggesting the Flowery Mead in *Parsifal*’¹⁰ was played in both Philadelphia and New York City after the war, and when Harvey Grace drew attention to it in the *Musical Times* of Jan-Feb 1918 it quickly gained a popular following in England. George Thalben-Ball raised its profile again when he played it at St Paul’s, Portman Square, on 8 February 1934 for the Organ Music Society.¹¹

THE TITLE DILEMMA

Jongen’s spelling, *May*, appears quite clearly on the manuscript (see illustration, above) but whether this is the English version, medieval French or even Walloon dialect remains unclear.¹² ‘May’ is indeed the spelling of the month in Walloon. Jongen was capable of writing letters in Liégeois patois, and in 1896 he had set a cantata for men’s voices in the Walloon dialect (*On joû d’osté*, W.81); but the obvious problem with this is that the first two words of the title are in standard

French, and are not dialectal. The most likely form of the Walloon, although occurring in various regional versions,¹³ would have been *Tchant d’may*.

The name of the month in both Walloon and French has, following the standardisation that finally prevailed after the later middle ages,¹⁴ demanded lower-case: *may*, or in modern French, *mai*. Jongen wrote neither. This then suggests that one solution to this semantic puzzle would be that *May* was not the month at all and was in fact a person’s name. Ever since the piece was published this has been the subject of popular conjecture, but no clear evidence for it has ever come to light. There are, nonetheless, circumstances that allow a speculative theory. It is no more than that, and tempting though it is to believe it, for the present it must remain conjectural.

Jongen was quite often given to dedicating his keyboard pieces to children of his acquaintance. In England, the piano piece *Crépuscule au lac Ogwen*, op.52, composed in September 1916, was dedicated *To My Dear Little Friend, Fiona McCleary*, the daughter of the organist of Holy Trinity Church, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire.¹⁵ At this time the Jongens’ own daughter Christiane was aged six and their twins Jacques and Mizelle about three. At the end of the war Jongen dedicated pieces to all three of them – the *Pages intimes*, op.55 – and in later years his *pièces caractéristiques* were frequently

written with children in mind.¹⁶ With particular relevance Jongen dedicated two compositions to SAR La Princesse Marie-José de Belgique, daughter of King Albert I and Élisabeth.¹⁷

On Monday 23 October 1916 Jongen travelled to Windsor, where he was to perform in a concert at the Royal Albert Institute.¹⁸ This was the annual concert of St George’s Chapel Choir, for which Jongen had been invited by Sir Walter Parratt, organist of St George’s, to play some of his own solo piano pieces. Parratt had learned of this Belgian musician ‘of great refinement’¹⁹ from Walford Davies, who had himself become well-acquainted with Jongen at the South Place Concerts. Walford Davies, a prominent figure at South Place, had been Parratt’s assistant organist at Windsor from the end of 1885.²⁰

The Windsor concert was covered extensively by the local press:

Music lovers were present in large numbers at the Royal Albert Institute on Monday evening, when the members of St George’s Chapel Choir gave their annual concert ... conducted by Sir Walter Parratt, Master of the King’s Music ... Among those present were: Princess Alexander of Teck ... and Princess Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein.

The concert was a very enjoyable one and encores were frequent throughout the evening. The forces under Sir Walter Parratt’s command have been considerably depleted

since the outbreak of war, no less than seven of the lay clerks having joined the Colours ... Notwithstanding this fact, however, the choir acquitted itself very creditably, and the programme was gone through in a most praiseworthy manner. The artists engaged for the occasion were all first class. The chief amongst them was ... Dr Joseph Jongen [sic] the famous Belgian pianist, who was formerly professor at the Liège Conservatoire. His contributions to the programme were quite a feature ... The works he rendered were of his own composition, and his brilliant execution of them gained for him very hearty applause. He was recalled on each occasion. During the interval Sir Walter Parratt introduced the talented Belgian composer to the Princesses...²¹

Parratt's choir included the choristers and the junior choristers, who sang a group of nursery rhymes.²² Children performed in this concert and it can be certain that children were also in the audience. At the time, the then Princess Alexander of Teck (later Countess Alice of Athlone) and Princess Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein (Duchess of Albany), were, respectively, 33 and 30 years old, but it would have been perfectly possible, even likely – given the presence of other young children – that their own children would also have been in attendance. The eldest child of Princess Victoria was the 10-year-old Prince Johann Leopold, but the eldest daughter of Princess Alexander of Teck was Her Serene Highness Princess May of Teck, a great-granddaughter of Queen Victoria. After George V renounced all German titles for the British royal family, she became Lady May Cambridge.²³

May was born on 23 January 1906,²⁴ and so at the time of the Windsor concert she would have been nearly 11 years old. Jongen's autographs of the *Chant de May* and its companion piece, *Menuet-Scherzo*, carry the simple colophons 'Londres April 1917', and the two pieces were first performed as interludes in a Blanche Marchesi Steinway Hall concert on 28 April.²⁵ Jongen was busy with other London concerts up until 17 April 1917, and so it is more than likely that he wrote the pieces between 17 and 27 April. Programme information, which was

clearly required before this, led Jongen to submit the titles as *Aria* and *Menuetto* and it was thus that they were billed.²⁶ So it would appear that Jongen only thought of the *Chant de May* title when he finally came to compose the piece, only days before the first performance. The April concert date distances yet further the concept of the month in the title, presuming, that is, that the Steinway Hall management did not for some reason bring the concert date back from May into April. Searches have found no record of this, neither on the programme itself nor in any discoverable advertisement.

However attractive this idea may be – yet more so in the whimsical imagining that Princess May might have sung or played the theme to Jongen at a reception on that October evening – there are other theories that are, at face value, more plausible. Yet in every case, when examined further, each of these becomes hypothetical. A macaronic French/English title is not out of the question but attempting to explain this only leads to

Was 'May' a 'get-out' lest someone at the time discover the true identity of the dedicatee?

further conjecture. Did Jongen simply wish to leave a tribute to the month of May as he experienced it in England? Was it, even, a deliberate gesture of a newly-converted Anglophile after he had lived in England for almost three years? It may all seem more likely, but none of it can be demonstrated.

A related poem is also quite plausible, since the *Pensée d'automne*, op.47 no.2, written two years previously, was inspired by the eponymous poem of Gabriel Fauré's poet, Armand Silvestre. The passionate descriptions in Goethe's *Mailied*, as Jongen could have known it in the second French version by Henri Blaze, *Lied de Mai* [sic],²⁷ resonate quite invitingly with the musical substance in the *Chant de May*: 'luminous sunshine, the voice of the brook, the lark's song on the clear air, the clouds and flowers of the morning.'²⁸ The first version of Goethe's verses by Blaze is slighter while Meyerbeer's so-called *Chant de mai* uses a different, original

Blaze text called *Chanson de mai*, the title of which is a rather more literal translation of *May Song*.²⁹ Yet none of these poems has a direct link to Jongen, and their titles do not correspond with Jongen's title. Furthermore, Jongen kept a book in which he wrote out his favourite poems. Goethe's *Mailied* does not appear and neither does any other 'May' poem or related title.

It has been alleged that Jongen is unlikely to have written the *Chant de May* for a German princess at this point during the first world war when, it is well-known, anti-German sentiment was strong. But May was born at Claremont and spoke English. Moreover, this very state of affairs could actually support a dedication to her. Pieces without dedications printed or written above their titles are extremely rare in Jongen's middle-period oeuvre. Of his 27 works composed in England, the *Chant de May* is unique in lacking such a dedication.³⁰ This might indeed have come about through a perceived necessity to keep such a dedication secret.

The enigma, however, persists. Did

Jongen actually wish this to be so? Was 'May' in fact a 'get-out' in the form of an English month scapegoat lest someone at the time discover the true identity of the dedicatee: Her Serene Highness Princess May of Teck? Lisa Colton³¹ surmises:

The title *sounds* like a nod to that sort of romantic medievalism that one gets quite frequently in c.1900 culture, [but the] one [a poem title] may not exclude the other [a person's name] as an underlying reason for the title.

Construction

Technical devices of the op.53 pieces – parallel chords, symmetrical figuration and octave doublings – are part of Jongen's 'original style, in which the odd point of imitation of Debussy is not out of place.'³² The *Chant de May* is unified through the preservation of the ostinato figuration for the accompanimental material of the whole piece, while Jongen transforms the

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◀ themes in a way indebted to both Franck and Liszt.³³

The principle used by Franck of sequential melodic extension of phrases based around anchor-notes was described by Tournemire as *phrases extensibles*.³⁴ Franck's principle is never used in quite the same way by Jongen, who preferred to apply a process of variation to whole phrases – *la phrase variée* – creating a quasi-improvisando effect, sometimes shifting the pitch of the anchor-notes themselves.³⁵ The principle is very clear at the return of the first subject in the *Chant de May* [Ex.1].

Many of Jongen's melodic lines that seem to be plainsong themes are actually original; the second theme of the *Chant de May* is one. These lie on the surface of the perpetual shifts and contrasts of harmony and modality that are at the foundation of Jongen's compositional process.³⁶ Both the op.53 pieces contrast altered versions of the whole-tone and pentatonic scales, the latter being the framework of the first theme of the *Chant de May*. Jean-Pierre Delville³⁷ points out that the themes of the *Chant de May* omit the fourth and seventh degrees of major scales, which is merely another definition of the pentatonic scale, but Jongen's note-omission process is the same with the other modes that occur. The repeat of the second theme adds a seventh to the pentatonic basis, but this is also the Mixolydian mode on G flat omitting the C flat. The top of page 4 [Chester edition] contrasts the Mixolydian mode in different positions: on G flat and D respectively [Ex.2a]. On page 5, line 3, bars 4-6, the emergence of the contrasting 'Jongen Mode' can be seen.³⁸ This is the descending melodic minor scale but with the major third [Ex.2b].

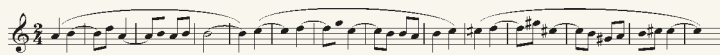
The coda uses more conventional harmonic dissonance and resolution over a tonic pedal, but almost everywhere Jongen's oscillating chromatic degrees can be seen. (e.g. F natural / F flat in the last line.) This is a chromaticism that is completely different from that of Franck and it sets Jongen apart³⁹ [Ex.3].

Notes communes

The spectre of Franck, however, glowed more brightly in Liège during the 1890s than that of anyone else. Thus there can

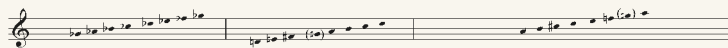
Joseph Jongen's *Chant de May* – music examples

Ex 1. Page 6, bar 2 etc. (Dynamics etc. omitted) *Phrases variées*



Ex 2a. Page 4. Contrasts of Mixolydian harmony

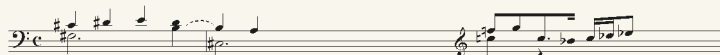
Ex 2b. Page 5, line 4. Emerging Jongen Mode



Ex 3. Page 7, line 3. Oscillating chromatic semitones



Ex 4. Notes communes in the Sonata eroica



Ex 5. Notes communes at the conclusion of the *Chant de May*

Ex 6. Notes communes in the *Humoresque* as played by Jongen



be no doubt that Jongen was aware of the *notes communes* principle. Jongen's organ professor in Liège was Charles-Marie Danneels, who taught according to the *École d'orgue* of Lemmens as edited by W. T. Best (1884).⁴⁰ So although Jongen left no specific instructions about *notes communes*, the conclusion has to be that, in a general legato texture, harmony notes that occur at the same pitch but in an adjacent part in a succeeding chord should be tied, unless there is an obvious reason not to do so. This includes instances where harmony notes are also melody notes; for example, during the theme of the *Sonata eroica* (Leduc page 5, line 3, bars 2-3) the bass b ties to the tenor b in the next chord, but on page 11, line 2, bar 3, the c² does repeat, since it is a critical melody note [Ex.4].

In the *Chant de May*, two passages invite consideration of this principle.

The first concerns the first two bars of page 4 [Chester]. It is feasible to tie the alto a¹ flats from the first bar into the second, but Jongen's slurs over the right hand part would suggest he did not want this [Ex.2a]. Here there is indeed an obvious reason not to do so. (The same thing occurs four bars later.) The second passage is the final *Più lento* coda. According to the principle, in the fourth bar of this the middle stave b¹ should be tied to the upper stave c² flat. The same thing applies two bars later, but at end, the phrase-marks again dictate the tied common notes [Ex.5].

The only recording of Jongen playing the organ occurs with his accompaniment of his own organ and cello piece, *Humoresque*, op.92.⁴¹ There is just one instance that is relevant in this: page 2, line 1 [CeBeDeM edition].⁴² In the left

◀ hand part, which is totally harmonic and accompanimental, the a in the lower part at the end of bar 3 moves to the upper part in the next chord at the start of bar 4. In the recording Jongen ties these notes, which are not marked with a tie in the score [Ex.6].

So there is some first-hand evidence, but there are then many places where *notes communes* cannot possibly be observed. Obviously, the introduction in the *Sonata eroïca* is one of these. Charles Hens, one of Jongen's favourite pupils, recorded the *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, W.169. This recording ties few common notes.⁴³ The *Religioso* section of the *Divertimento* of the *Symphonie concertante*, op.81, is worth analysis in respect of *notes communes*, but this is beyond the scope of this article.

Jongen's performances

Chester, the publisher, kept the ink autograph of the *Chant de May*, which subsequently disappeared during the second world war; but Jongen's pencil autograph reveals a number of misprints:

Chester Edition			
Page	Line	Bar	
3	1	6	Pedal has a tie into the next bar
5	2	3	Alto voice d ¹ should be natural
5	3	6	Lowest note of left-hand chord should be g sharp, not g natural
7	1	6	Pause after this bar is a short pause
7	2	1	Lowest note of right-hand chord should be g ² natural, not g ² flat

The published registration for the *Chant de May* is for the Steinway Hall 1912 Welte Philharmonic Organ,⁴⁴ which was moved to Steinway's new premises at 1-2 St George Street in the autumn of 1924. In 1945 this organ was sold to a private buyer in Austria.⁴⁵ Jongen's disowning of this registration is demonstrated in his personal copy, which exists in the library of the Brussels Conservatoire. It contains two registrations including that for the concert hall Cavaillé-Coll/Mutin

of the Conservatoire where he played the *Chant de May* frequently. There are extra instructions, as well as the opening combination:

G.O. Flûte 8, Bourdon, Violoncelle
Pos: Flûte 8, Cor de Nuit [expressif]
Récit: Musette (Octavin préparé)
Péd: Soubasse 16 et Flûte Douce 8
Récit à Pos.

Chester Edition

Page	Line	Bar	
3	2	4	Récit Salicional 8 added with Péd 8
4	2	3	+ G.O. Montre
4	4	5	- G.O. Montre
4	4	6	+ Récit 2 et Fl.8
5	3	2	Flûte 8 seule G.O.
6	1	2	Otez 2 Récit et la Flûte 8
6	2	3	Otez Sal. Récit

The Octavin of the *Récit* was included with the *Anches*, while the *Musette* was with the *Fonds*. In both instances Jongen's preference was for a solo reed at the opening, and not the alternative Flûte, and it is noteworthy that the *Récit 2* was used instead of the Flûte douce 4 indicated in the printed edition.

Jongen has also written '4 mins' as the total duration, even though he gives no metronome mark. The quicker middle section, *rallentandos* and *Più lento* coda make calculation of precise speeds difficult, but if 40 seconds are allotted to the coda plus the preceding pause, the remainder of the piece would demand an average tempo of about crotchet=85. Arithmetically this can be apportioned so that, given the slowing of the tempo in the passage that leads back to *Tempo initial*, the opening may perhaps be at about crotchet 78, with an increase to about 90 for the *Poco più animato*. ■

John Scott Whiteley is organist emeritus of York Minster and visiting research fellow at the University of Huddersfield.

References

1. Henry Holloway (1871-1948) was assistant organist of Worcester Cathedral before he moved to St Stephen's, Bournemouth in 1894. (John Henderson, *A Dictionary of Composers*

for *Organ*, 3rd Edition, Swindon, 2005.)

2. Jongen was so addressed by Eugène Ysaÿe in a letter dated 15 Feb 1928.
3. Marie Alphonse Nicolas Joseph Jongen (1873-1953) was born in Liège and held the posts of *organiste titulaire* and *co-titulaire* at the Collégiale St Jacques, Liège, from 1894 to c.1908. Before the first world war he was professor of harmony at the Liège Conservatoire and after the war he was appointed professor of counterpoint and fugue at the Brussels Conservatoire, where he became director in 1925.
4. The title printed on the programme was *Poème élégiaque*, but as this was a solo organ item it can only have referred to the *Prélude élégiaque*.
5. *Bournemouth Daily Echo*, 2 Jan 1919.
6. Lucy Broadwood, Diaries, 17 Aug 1914 and 23 Sep 1917. I am grateful to Alan Gibbs for providing this reference.
7. Juliette Folville (1870-1946) was professor of piano at the Liège Conservatoire and she was also a refugee in Bournemouth during the first world war.
8. Details of the Brindley & Foster organ at this church may be found on the National Pipe Organ Register, www.npor.org.uk.
9. The two pieces of opus 53 are the *Chant de May* and *Menuet-Scherzo*. The *Toccata* was that in D flat, op.104.
10. Robert Walker Robson, 'Repertoire of the Modern Organist', *Musical Opinion*, London 1925, 42.
11. Programme, Conservatoire Royal de Musique de Bruxelles [CRMB], Fonds Jongen.
12. Chester's mid-20th century reprint irresponsibly altered the title to *Chant de Mai*: this was unauthorised, misleading and incorrect. Unfortunately it is an error that has been perpetrated elsewhere, including in the British Library catalogues.
13. See moti-wallon.org and freelang.com. Accessed 10 Oct 2018.
14. Communication from Lisa Colton, Reader in musicology, University of Huddersfield, 9 Oct 2018.
15. Registers of the Royal College of Organists, London, 1887-99.
16. See Appendix V in: John Scott Whiteley, *Joseph Jongen and his Organ Music*, Pendragon, Stuyvesant & New York 1997, 228 et seq.
17. *Habañera* op.86 and *Jeux de nymphe* op.91 no.2.

18. The Royal Albert Institute was in Sheet Street, but was demolished in 1977. [wiki] Jongen had a concert in London on the previous evening, and so a Monday morning journey is virtually certain.
19. Whiteley, J.S., op. cit., 89.
20. H.C. Colles, *Walford Davies: A Biography*, OUP 1942, 13, 17. The South Place Concerts took place at the South Place Institute in Finsbury Square.
21. *Windsor, Eton and Slough Express*, Windsor, 28 Oct 1916, 5.
22. By Parry, Stanford and C.H. Lloyd from *Kookoorookoo and Other Songs*, A. & C. Black, London, 1916.
23. For a few days in July 1917 she was just Miss May Cambridge before the title was confirmed. [wiki]
24. Before she agreed to be known as Queen Mary, following the accession of George V, Princess Victoria Mary of Teck was informally known as 'May' after her birth month. George V and Queen Mary were highly supportive of the Belgians in the first world war, but Jongen's children were certain that Jongen did not have Queen Mary in mind. (Interviews Aug 1980 and Jun 1993.)
25. Blanche Marchesi (1863-1940) was a French mezzo-soprano who left descriptions of her London concerts, in general terms, in her autobiography, *Singer's Pilgrimage*, Grant Richards, London 1923.
26. Programme: CRMB, Fonds Jongen.
27. *Poésies traduites par M.H. Blaze*, Paris 1873, 26.
28. For the complete version see Whiteley, J.S., op. cit., 107-8, where it is stated that this was the version used in a setting by Gustave Huberti. In fact, Huberti took a different French version by G. Lagye.
29. *Poésies complètes de Henri Blaze*, Charpentier, Paris 1842, 283.
30. That is, the opus 53 pair, *Chant de May* and *Menuet-Scherzo*.
31. As note 14.
32. *Nouveau Journal*, Lyon, 8 Feb 1927: *écriture originale, où une petite pointe de Debussysme n'est pas déplacée*.
33. Whiteley, J.S., op. cit., 107.
34. Charles Tournemire, *César Franck*, Delagrave, Paris 1931, 23.
35. Whiteley, J.S., op. cit., 100.
36. *Ibid.*, 99.
37. Jean-Pierre Delville, *L'œuvre d'orgue de Joseph Jongen*, Mémoire, Musique en Wallonie, Liège 1975.
38. Whiteley, J.S., op. cit., 99-100.
39. *Ibid.*
40. Joseph Jongen, *Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse II*, Mazères, 1940 et seq., 47. Manuscript held by the CRMB, Fonds Jongen.
41. 78 rpm record: Columbia LFX 87, recorded c.1930.
42. CeBeDeM (*Centre Belge de Documentation Musicale*), having gone into bankruptcy in 2015, now continues under the auspices of the Brussels Conservatoire.
43. Whiteley, J.S., op. cit., 154-5.
44. For further details on this organ see Whiteley, J.S., op. cit., 133-4, 201.
45. Letter to the author from Henry Z. Steinway, 30 Nov 1992.

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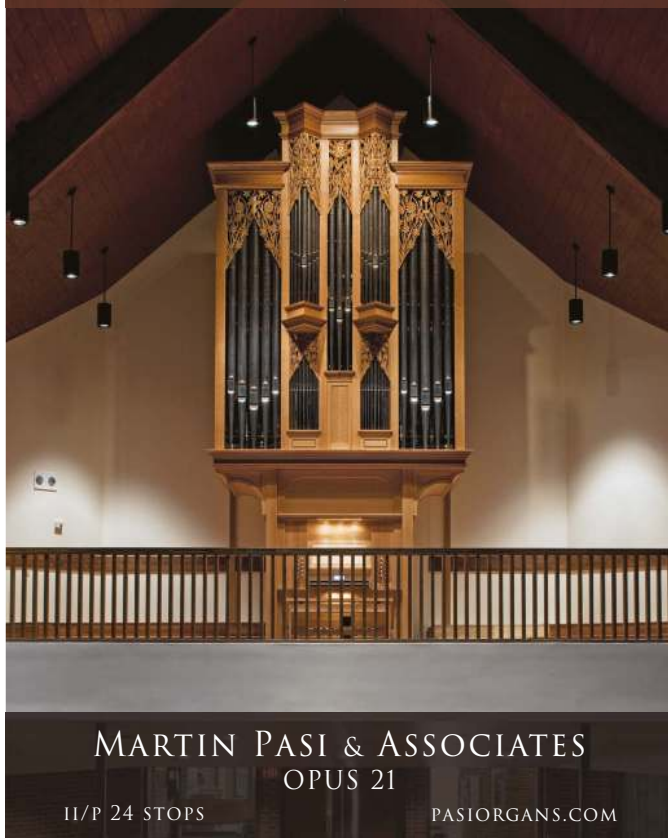
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Wave energy

Stephen Pritchard reports from the inaugural London International Choral Conducting Competition, where the jury were looking for much more than technical proficiency.

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NATHANIEL COMER

▲ Finalists conducted a choir with which they had previously rehearsed just twice

LONDON INTERNATIONAL CHORAL CONDUCTING COMPETITION

20-21 October 2018, Royal Academy of Music, London

Jury (chair) Prof. Ragnar Rasmussen (director of Choral Studies and Conducting, Norwegian University of Science and Technology), Martina Batič (music director, Choir of Radio France), Dr Amy Bebbington (director of training, *abcd*), Bernie Sherlock (artistic director AOIC International Choral Conducting Summer School, and conductor, New Dublin Voices), Patrick Russill (head of choral conducting, Royal Academy of Music)

All choirs have strong opinions about their conductors – not always complimentary – so the knowledge that, in addition to a distinguished jury, the 80 choristers they would be conducting would also be marking their work was just one of the daunting challenges facing finalists in the first London International Choral Conducting Competition.

Founders and trustees Mark Griffiths and James Davey, prominent in the British choral world as conductors of the prize-winning choirs Coro and Chantage, felt that this would be key to the success of their

new enterprise, describing it as ‘our USP’. Together with Dr Amy Bebbington, head of training at the Association of British Choral Conductors, and Coro singer and fundraising wizard Robbie Paterson, they set about devising a competition that would involve their choirs in both a celebration of singing and a method to identify the cream of the next generation of choral conductors.

‘In this first competition of its kind, we wanted to have an element of “audience vote” in addition to jury votes,’ said Davey,

‘The audience would be the choirs themselves who were performing for the conductors’

‘but here the audience would be the choirs themselves who were performing for the conductors, not the audience that would hear them sing. In effect, the choirs’ marks would make them the sixth member of the jury.’

The initial idea of a joint festival for Coro and Chantage developed into a competition for conductors that would also include a third choir from overseas – in this inaugural competition, the distinguished Finnish chamber choir cc FREIA [sic].

The six finalists had been chosen by Griffiths, Davey and Bebbington from

among entries from 30 countries spanning six continents. With an age limit of 18-32, entrants submitted a detailed application that included a video of them at work with their own choirs, filmed from the front – the viewpoint of the choir. The selectors were looking for evidence of technical competence, strong communication, interpretation and artistic ability; but for the finals, Dr Bebbington explained that she and her fellow jurors were ‘also judging whether candidates would be capable of

being dropped in at short notice to take over a performance with a professional choir.’

Jack Apperley, 24, admitted to being ‘stunned’, even a little ‘daunted’, to be in the final, although, along with the other finalists, his pedigree looked pretty strong: he studied under Simon Halsey at Birmingham University, took a Master’s in conducting at the RAM, and now works with the London Symphony Chorus and the BBC Singers as well as conducting, among others, Imperial College Chamber Choir, Concordia Voices and several workplace choirs. ▶

NATHANIEL COMER



JEREMY HUBBARD



JEREMY HUBBARD



▲ (clockwise, from top) James Jolly announces the results, a choir in rehearsal, and winner Julia Selina Blank with Mark Griffiths

Each finalist spent the weekend rehearsing the choirs in closed sessions, but *Choir & Organ* was given access to observe the different approaches of each conductor, how they built a choir's trust, and how they communicated their wishes. On the second day, each candidate was assigned a strictly timed slot in front of the jury to work intensively with their allotted choir in their chosen repertoire – everything from Jean Mouton's *Salve nos Domine* to *Canticum Novum* by Ivo Antognini, through works by numerous composers, including Schütz, Lobo, Bruckner, Parry and Frank Martin.

In the session rehearsing the Finnish choir, the international dimension of the competition was evident: here were singers from Helsinki being directed in English by candidates from Sweden, Germany, Russia and New Zealand. Swede Rebecka Gustafsson was bold and direct in her wishes; Julia Selina Blank of Germany was not happy with the way the choir was arranged and brought them much closer to the edge of the stage ... blocking the view of the jurors, so that had to be rethought; Maria Avdeyeva of Russia showed an illuminatingly deep understanding of Parry; and Jono Palmer, from New Zealand, emphasised the supreme importance of

clean diction in his reading of Gibbons's *Hosanna to the Son of David*.

When the candidates came to rehearse the massed choirs in the piece specially commissioned for the event, *The Cries of Music* by Janet Wheeler to words by Euan Tait, it was notable that each concentrated on the same dangerous corners, while having different concerns about consonants, tempi and dynamics. The singers had six separate copies of the piece in order to keep each candidate's directional markings separate. I asked one singer how he managed to retain each interpretation in his head, as well as on paper, and he admitted that it would be surprising if one person's ideas didn't spill into another's; but ultimately it came down to the conductors' skill at communicating their wishes directly to the singers.

In the grand final each candidate conducted two pieces, pre- and post-1900, and *The Cries of Music*. It is often said of new music that getting a first performance is hard enough but not nearly as difficult as getting a second. By contrast, this piece received six performances on its first outing, each subtly different and yet each equally rewarding, both for the singers and the audience. *The Cries of Music* is a joyously warm piece, skilfully drawing a

parallel between the singers' experience of choral music and our common experience of life's trajectory. Great washes of delicious harmony are percolated with tricky semiquaver interjections, tumbling over one another in a bravura display of word painting – certainly one to keep any choir on its toes.

Notable moments from the grand final were Pascal Adoumbou impressively conducting everything without a score; Jack Apperly sensibly stopping and starting again when a mobile phone and a police siren conspired to wreck a start; Maria Avdeyeva (and Chantage) showing nerves of steel in Jane Runestad's technically demanding *Alleluia*; similarly, Rebecka Gustafsson steering a clearly anxious Coro through the fiendish twists and turns of *La voix du bien-aimé* by Jean-Yves Daniel-Lesur; Jono Palmer giving a nice, neat shape to *The Cries of Music*, and Julia Selina Blank proving a tactile and engaged interpreter of the Kyrie from Frank Martin's Mass for Double Choir.

It might have been this last performance that clinched it for Julia Selina Blank, who took the first prize of £5,000, with Jack Apperly taking the £1,000 second prize. After the ceremony, a clearly delighted Blank told *Choir & Organ*: 'In the end it is about sound quality and what we can emotionally convey between ensemble and audience. I am happy that the jury and the choirs saw that in my work. For me, the spirit in this competition felt very special. The contestants were colleagues and everyone met to celebrate a weekend of choral music. I highly recommend it for all the young choral conductors out there.'

The next LICCC is planned for 2020 and is already finding enthusiastic support. As Simon Halsey, chorus master of the London Symphony Chorus and the Berlin Philharmonic Chorus, put it: 'This fantastic new conducting competition is long overdue for a country with such an immensely strong choral tradition.' ■ www.liccc.co.uk

Stephen Pritchard writes on music for the Observer and the classical music website Bachtrack. He trained at Portsmouth Cathedral and sings with the English Chamber Choir.

RECITAL ROUND-UP

BATTLE CRY

Darius Battiwalla writes that his recital on 28 January (Leeds Town Hall) includes some rarely heard pieces: 'Compositions by Fela Sowande, the Nigerian-born virtuoso who was organist at Kingsway Hall, London in the 1940s – his powerful and impassioned setting of *Go Down, Moses* and the short dramatic improvisation *Joshua fit de battle of Jericho*.' Battiwalla is also including *Evening Idyll* by Gatty Sellars, Sowande's predecessor at Kingsway Hall: 'He played frequently for films and radio and was described during his lifetime as "the world's greatest descriptive organist".'

'Two Spanish pieces complete the recital, one baroque and one modern, both using the flamboyant rhythms and brash reed sounds typical of the Spanish organ school.'

STEPPING BACK IN TIME

On 17 January, exactly 150 years after the Hill organ at St Martin's, Salisbury, was inaugurated, the church's current organist Robert Fielding leads a birthday celebration in the form of a talk and recital, including pieces composed around 1869. He told *C&O*: 'In a rare surviving 1868 Estimate Book of Wm. Hill & Son, a list of proposed stops for a new organ for St Martin's Church, Salisbury, is given and a price quoted as £380. Four stops marked with an X were added later in 1875 by son Thomas Hill, with further pipework added in 1897 by nephew Arthur George Hill.'

'The organ would have been built and assembled by William Hill during 1868 then brought to Salisbury, most probably by rail, re-assembled, voiced to the building and tuned ready for the opening services on 17 January 1869. William Hill sadly died in the following year, 1870.'

'On 9 January 1869, the *Salisbury & Winchester Journal* ran this paragraph: "St Martin's, Salisbury. The opening of the new organ, by Messrs. Hill and Son, is fixed for Sunday, Jan. 17th when special sermons will be preached, and collections made in aid of the organ fund. The Morning Sermon will be preached by the Rev. H. T. Armfield M.A., Minor Canon of the Cathedral; that in the Afternoon, by the Rev. W. W. Tatum, M.A., Rector; and that in the evening by the Rev. C.F. Hyde, M.A., Vicar of Dilton Marsh. Mr. Theodore Aylward will preside at the Organ."

'The organ continues to impress worshippers, recitalists, students and visitors to the church with its glorious sounds and robust construction,' says Fielding. During 2019, the instrument will be dismantled and cleaned by Stephen Cooke Organs of Westbury, with some voicing and work to the actions. Fielding continues, 'It will be important to maintain the integrity of the instrument and ensure that we are handing on what is a real gem in the city to those who will play and pray with the organ for the next 150 years.'

Robert Fielding's book Organs & Organists of St Martin's Church, Salisbury (available from Amazon UK) traces the musicians and instruments of St Martin's since records begin in 1567.



ROBERT FIELDING

Alton, St Lawrence at 8pm

David Hill (8 Jan), Roger Sayer (5 Feb) 01420 543628

Birmingham Symphony Hall at 1pm

Thomas Trotter (28 Jan)
0121 780 3333

Birmingham Town Hall at 1pm

Thomas Trotter (14 Jan, 11, 25 Feb)
0121 780 3333

Brighton, The Meeting House, Univ. of Sussex at 12 noon

D'Arcy Trinkwon (30 Jan, 27 Feb)
01273 678217

Cheltenham College at 1.15pm

Adrian Partington (5 Feb)
01242 265600

Chichester Cathedral at 1.10pm

Charles Harrison (12 Feb)
01243 782595

Clitheroe, St Mary Magdalene at 1pm

James Lancelot (19 Feb)
07876 126743

Cranleigh School Chapel at 12.45pm

Philip Scriven (15 Jan, 5 Feb)
01483 542009

Leeds Town Hall at 1.05pm

Gordon Stewart (14 Jan), Darius Battiwalla (21, 28 Jan, 25 Feb), Graham Barber (4 Feb)
0113 378 6600

Leicester Cathedral at 1pm

Stephen Maxson (14 Jan), Stephen Power (4 Feb) 01162 615357

St Lawrence Jewry, London EC2 at 1pm

Catherine Ennis (8, 15, 22, 29 Jan), student series (12, 19, 26 Feb)
020 7600 9478

London EC3, St Michael's Cornhill at 1pm

Oliver MacFarlane (7 Jan), Jonathan Rennert (14 Jan, 25 Feb), Philip Berg (21 Jan), Benjamin Newlove (28 Jan), Eleni Keventsidou (4 Feb), Jack Spencer (11 Feb), Andrew Furniss (18 Feb) 07799 641699

London EC4, St Dunstan-in-the-West at 1.15pm

Martin Ellis (11 Jan, 8 Feb)
020 7405 1929

London EC4, St Paul's Cathedral at 4.45pm

James Orford (6 Jan), Natalia Letyuk (13 Jan), Anthony Gritten (20 Jan), Alexander Goodwin (3 Feb), Jean-Philippe Merckaert (10 Feb), Alexander Pott (17 Feb)
020 7651 0898

London EC4, St Stephen Walbrook at 12.30pm

Michael Nicholas (18 Jan)
020 7626 9000

London SE1, Royal Festival Hall at 7.30pm

Nathan Laube (17 Jan), Catherine Ennis (25 Feb) 020 3879 9555

London SE1, Southwark Cathedral at 1.10pm

Peter Wright (14 Jan, 25 Feb), Stephen Disley (21 Jan), Gillian Lloyd (28 Jan), Andrzej Malitowski (4 Feb), Freddie James (11 Feb), Richard Pilliner (18 Feb) 020 7367 6700

London SW1, Methodist Central Hall at 3pm

Gerard Brooks (20 Jan), Andrew Furniss (17 Feb) 020 8654 2000

London W1, St George's, Hanover Square at 1.10pm

David Gammie (8 Jan), Anthony Gritten (22 Jan), George de Voil (5 Feb), Joshua Xerri (19 Feb)
020 7629 0874

London W1, Grosvenor Chapel at 1.10pm

Benjamin Newlove (15 Jan), Samuel Ali (29 Jan), Ben Giddens (12 Feb), Simon Williams (26 Jan)
020 7499 1684

London WC2, Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church at 4pm*

Tom Winpenny (23 Feb), Isabelle Demers (6pm, 26 Jan) 01953 688393

London WC2, St Martin-in-the-Fields at 1pm

James Gough (11 Jan), Andrew Earis (14 Jan, 11 Feb) 020 7766 1100

Oxford Town Hall at 12 noon

Cynthia Hall (27 Feb) 01865 252195

Portsmouth Cathedral at 1.10pm*

Hilary Punnett (31 Jan), Sachin Gunga (8pm, 1 Feb), Peter Gould & Sachin Gunga (28 Feb) 023 9282 3300

Reading Town Hall at 1pm

Andrew Baldwin (28 Jan)
0118 960 6060

St Albans Cathedral at 12.30pm*

Timothy Easter (16 Jan), Colin Walsh (5.30pm, 19 Jan), Jonathan Lee (13 Feb), David Hill (5.30pm, 16 Feb)
01727 860780

Salisbury, St Martin's at 7.30pm

Robert Fielding (17 Jan)
01794 414249

Warwick, St Mary's at 1.15pm

Samuel Bristow (1 Feb), Mark Swinton (15 Feb) 01926 403940

Wells Cathedral at 1.05pm*

Richard Tanner (10 Jan), Matthew Owens (7pm, 24 Jan; 1.05pm, 31 Jan), Callum Alger (21 Feb) 01749 674483

For fuller listings, visit
www.choirandorgan.com

* unless otherwise stated

While every effort is made to provide correct information, readers are strongly advised to telephone the numbers given to confirm details before attending.

BREXIT BRIEFING – EFFECTS OF A BREXIT ON CONTRACTS



Victoria Barrett, the Founder and Director of IP and media law consultancy VLT LEGAL, considers the impact of Brexit on contracts. She makes recommendations when entering into a new contract or amending existing ones, on behalf of the Incorporated Society of Musicians

Musicians are likely to have a variety of different types of contract with EU partners, ranging from those for provision of services (performing, teaching, composition, consultancy, music education), to those based on licensing of intellectual property, such as publishing, recording, digital delivery of content. At the time of writing there is still no clear indication of whether Brexit will be soft, hard or 'no deal', so this briefing looks at some of the possible impacts that Brexit may have on ISM members' contracts, and makes some recommendations for measures that might help to Brexit-proof future or existing contracts.

The principal impacts to be aware of include:

- pieces of legislation which apply to the contract pre-Brexit (e.g. employment law, immigration law, copyright and IP law) could cease to apply after Brexit;
- resulting changes in meanings of definitions and terminology used in the contract;
- financial consequences arising from fluctuations in currency, as well as new costs (such as tariffs, taxes, passport and visa costs);
- UK no longer being included in the EU-wide Conventions that apply to governing law and jurisdiction.

Some examples of consequences that could flow from these impacts might be:

- it could become illegal to provide certain services (such as digital services) into EU countries from the UK and vice versa; since much of the recent body of EU copyright legislation has been drafted with border-free licensing and content access in mind, there is a possibility that it may simply no longer apply in the UK;
- contracts that involve licences of copyright or other intellectual property may be affected by changes in definition and terminology. For instance, where the Territory is defined as the

EU, this could no longer include the UK after Brexit. Similarly, references to certain EU copyright and software regulations may no longer be valid if they have not been incorporated into UK law at the time of Brexit; and even where they have been incorporated, they may start to diverge over time as UK law develops independently of Brussels;

- imposition of new tariffs, tax, or visa and passport requirements could make cross-border movement of musicians and their instruments and equipment much more expensive, time-consuming, subject to delays, or even illegal;
- where the contract does not state which country's law and courts will apply to contract disputes, certain EU Conventions decide the issue currently, ensuring (amongst other matters) that the court's decision in one country can be enforced in the other party's country if necessary. Some or all of those Conventions may not apply in the UK after Brexit meaning that a judgment obtained in a UK court against an EU partner may not be enforceable in their local court, and vice versa.

Force majeure clauses: In some cases these changes could render the contract impossible to carry out; in other cases the changes could make it very expensive and difficult, but not actually impossible. This is an important distinction, since a *force majeure* clause can usually only be relied upon in the former circumstance, and not in the latter. So for instance, where a contract has become difficult (but not impossible or illegal) to perform, due to escalating costs (such as increased tariffs, taxes, visa/passport costs) or loss of profitability, the *force majeure* clause would probably not apply. Even where the contract has become impossible or illegal to perform, the *force majeure* clause will probably only be enforceable if the list of *force majeure* events includes a specific Brexit-related event such as change in law, or imposition of new tariffs/taxes/visa controls (an event as generalised as "Brexit" or "effects of Brexit" is unlikely to be enforceable).

Brexit clause: Unsurprisingly, there has been talk of a catch-all Brexit clause which could be included in contracts. Such a clause would be based on concepts that appear in large financial contracts, such as "material adverse change" and "hardship" clauses. These clauses tend to define certain events that might trigger either termination, renegotiation of the contract, or an automatic adjustment in fees and prices; the trigger event should be specific (rather than a generalised description such "effects of Brexit"), such as:

- the imposition of tariff/visa/passport charges/customs checks;
- changes made to immigration rules;
- changes to laws applicable to a relevant activity/industry, e.g. music licensing.

The clause would then go on to outline the intended consequences of the trigger event, such as:

- either party, or one party, has the right to terminate;
- the parties might wish to expressly state that the contract may **not** be terminated as a result of the particular defined event;
- the parties agree to renegotiate the contract;
- the parties agree which one will take responsibility for the increased costs resulting from the defined event;
- the parties agree which one will take responsibility for any new statutory or compliance obligation;
- the parties agree upon alternative governing law/ jurisdiction provisions.

Recommendations:

If an ISM member is entering a new contract with an EU partner in the coming months, or has an opportunity to amend an existing contract, the following measures should be borne in mind:

- **governing law and jurisdiction:** (a) a contract that has specified that it is governed by English law, and is subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the English courts, will be on surer ground, since this wording should ensure that it will be possible to obtain an enforceable judgment against an EU partner, whatever type of Brexit is achieved; (b) a more flexible approach would be to use an arbitration clause, since arbitral awards are governed by the New York Convention, which has international (rather than EU only) application;
- **terminology and definitions:** any reference to statutes or regulations should be followed by the words "as amended or re-enacted from time to time". Check that definitions and references to the EU are followed by the words "and the UK" where necessary;
- **Brexit clause:** consider the likely impacts on your contract and draft a simple Brexit clause to cover the events you anticipate and your preferred consequences, such as renegotiation of the contract; termination/no termination of the contract; automatic adjustment of applicable currency or rates for payments and fees;
- or, if there are specific Brexit-related circumstances in which you feel that it would be simpler and more appropriate to terminate the contract immediately as necessary, include the anticipated event in the **force majeure clause**.

ISM members have free access to our specialist in-house legal team. They offer contract advice, including drafting contracts and negotiating directly on your behalf. Find out more about joining the ISM on page 24.

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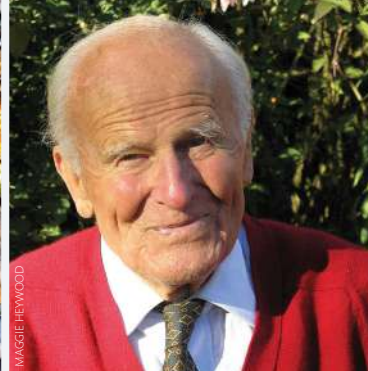
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NEW DISCS COMING OUT IN... JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2019

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▲ In-flight entertainment: Stile Antico present music by Catholics forced to flee Tudor England

However unsettled the political climate in the UK these days, we are nevertheless in clover when compared with some other countries. War on our own soil, and political or religious persecution, are so far removed from our collective consciousness that it calls for a major leap of the imagination even to begin to conceive of the fear of putting a foot wrong, and the terror, hardship and

loneliness that accompanies flight into exile.

A new CD from Stile Antico, **In a Strange Land** [Harmonia mundi HMM 902266], seeks to reflect something of the feelings of composers who fled England during the 16th century – or remained and walked a narrow tightrope. Most were Catholics who had survived the Reformation under Edward VI, breathed again under Mary I as she tried to reinstate

Roman Catholicism, and then found themselves under threat again during the reign of Elizabeth I. The titles of some of the works – Dowland's *Flow, my tears* and *In this trembling shadow*, Byrd's *Tristitia et anxietas*, Dering's *Factum est silentium*, and White's *Lamentations a 5* – explicitly suggest the prevailing mood of the disc. But alongside them is one contemporary work that maybe carries a more subtle message. *The Phoenix and the Turtle*, by Huw Watkins (b.1976), is a Shakespeare poem setting commissioned for Stile Antico, who gave the premiere in 2014. In his booklet notes, Matthew O'Donovan explains: 'On the surface [it] is a poem about the death of ideal love. One theory, however, is that the poem is an allegory about Catholic martyrs, in which case the most probable contenders for phoenix and turtle dove would be St Anne Line, martyred at Tyburn in 1501, and her husband Roger, who had died shortly before ... If this is the case, then they in turn stand for the wider Catholic Church which the nation had rejected and, without doubt, the "bird of loudest lay" refers to William Byrd, England's (and the Catholic community's) most revered composer.' *In a Strange Land* is released on 4 January.

Staying in sombre mood, though in a very different musical idiom, Signum Classics are releasing a CD of Will Todd's **Passion Music and Jazz Missa Brevis** [SIGCD 563]. *Passion Music* is a 40-minute work that brings together seasonal texts,



CHORAL CDS

Airs sérieux et à boire, vol.2, 'Si vous vouliez un jour'

Les Arts Florissants/Christie
Harmonia mundi HAF 8905306

Berlioz: The Damnation of Faust
Dvořák: *Te Deum*

BBC Broadcast live from the Royal Festival Hall, 25 February 1953;
Joan Hammond (m-s), Richard Lewis (t), Marian Nowakowski (b),
Hervey Alan (b-bar), BBC Choral Society, BBC SO/Sargent
Cameo Classics CC 9108

Benjamin Britten: Choral Works

RIAS Kammerchor/Doyle
Harmonia mundi HMM 902285

Manuel Cardoso: Requiem, Lamentations, Magnificat & Motets

Cupertinos/Toscano
Hyperion CDA 68252

Deep Within: Music of Arundel and Brighton in Lourdes

Arundel and Brighton Diocesan Choir
HAVPCD404

Love Songs

The King's Singers
Signum Classics SIGCD 565

In a Strange Land – Elizabethan Composers in Exile

Stile Antico
Harmonia mundi HMM 902266

Johann Kuhnau: Complete Sacred Works vol.4

Opella Musica, Camerata
Lipsiensis/Meyer
CPO 555190-2

including the *Stabat Mater*, *The Seven Last Words from the Cross*, and the well known hymns 'Love Unknown' and 'Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?' Todd fuses jazz and choral music, including an expressive female gospel soloist, to poignant effect.

Also from Signum come two CDs for Valentine's Day: **Love Songs**, a compilation of pieces sung by the King's Singers [SIGCD 565]; and **Roxanna Panufnik: Love Abide** [SIGCD 564], a collection of recordings from Voces8, the Exultate Singers, Colla Voce Singers, and the London Oratory School Schola, the last of whom present *Mass of the Angels*, a 'remix' (in Panufnik's words) of 'the gentle and meandering 9th-century plainsong Missa de Angelis, which is still sung in its original form in many Catholic churches today.'

Award-winning Irish composer John Buckley (b. 1951) has found advocates for his choral canon in the Dublin-based Mornington Singers, conducted by Orla Flanagan. Some of the works on their new CD, **To the Northeast**, on the Divine Art label [DDA 25187], are sung in Irish, including the title work; the composer writes, 'Ninth-century Irish lyrics are characterised by perfection of form, precision of language, and richness of imagery. They are frequently meditative in tone, reflecting on the marvels of nature ... they evoke striking images, which have lost none of their immediacy with the passage of time: the winds still awaken the spirit of the waves, cascades of fish can still remind us of flights of birds, and seals are still

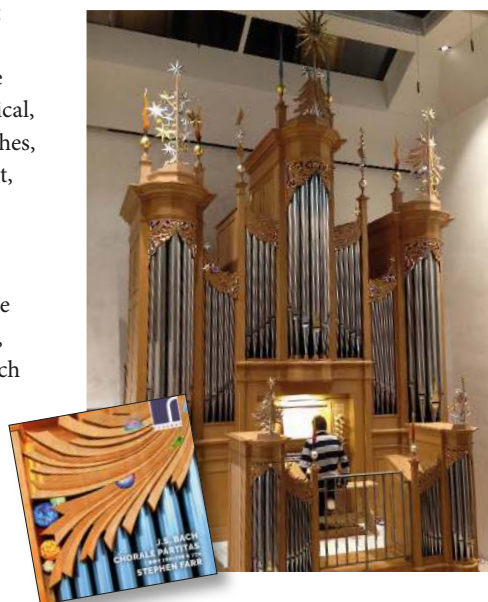
joyous and noble.' The CD will be released on 15 February.

From Resonus comes an opportunity to hear the new house organ built by Bernard Aubertin in 2015, and installed two years later in a purpose-built basement room in the Sussex home of Royal College of Organists vice-president Paul Griffiths and composer Joanna Marsh. The III/30 instrument has mechanical action throughout. Stephen Farr presents a programme of **J.S. Bach: Chorale Partitas** [RES 10234]. He told *C&O*: 'There's a kind of orthodoxy at the moment that you have to go to a historic instrument, like a Schnitger, to play Bach. But it would be nice to think we're beyond the point where you can only play this music on one kind of organ. We wanted an instrument that had lots of characterful colours – for variation after variation, it needed a lot of variety. Aubertin famously has very characterful and vivid voicing. In some ways the organ looks a bit French classical, but it's got lots of typical Aubertin touches, like an enclosed Récit, and an Undulant, and wonderful overblowing Flûtes Traversières. It's a fantastic soundscape to work with, and interestingly, it feels quite like an old instrument to play. The playing actions are incredibly sensitive, and with certain stops the voicing is such that you can't hurry the instrument: it's an instrument that in many ways tells you how fast you can go on a particular sound. It's quite instructive – there's often a sense that you're coaxing the instrument into speech

rather than just dictating how you're going to play.' The room in which the organ is housed has air conditioning and humidity controls, and is completely soundproofed – amazingly, though the house is near Gatwick airport, recording only had to be stopped twice because of overhead traffic noise in the two days of recording.

Other organ releases include Paul Jacobs playing **Saint-Saëns: Symphony no.3 'Organ'** with the Utah Symphony under the baton of Thierry Fischer [Hyperion CDA 68201]; and the 10th volume of Carson Cooman's organ music, **Jubilee** [Divine Art DDA 25185], in which the Hauptwerk system reproduces the sounds of the Mathis organ in SS Peter and Paul, Görlitz. ■

▼ The Aubertin organ in the home of Paul Griffiths



Giovanni de Macque: Madrigals from Sesto Libro de Madrigali de Cinque Voci, Venezia 1613; Capricci e Canzoni for organ solo
Weser-Renaissance Bremen, Edoardo Bellotti (org)/Cordes CPO 777977-2

Roxanna Panufnik: Love Abide
Colla Voce Singers, Exultate Singers, VOCES8/Ward Signum Classics SIGCD 564

Perpetual Twilight
UCD Choral Scholars/Earley Signum Classics SIGCD 558

Taverner: Gloria Tibi Trinitas
Choir of The Queen's College, Oxford, Contrapunctus/Rees Signum Classics SIGCD 570

To The Northeast – The choral music of John Buckley
Mornington Singers/Flanagan Divine Art DDA 25187

Will Todd: Passion Music, Jazz Missa Brevis
Shaneeka Simon, John Turville, St Martin's Voices, Will Todd Ensemble/Todd Signum Classics SIGCD 563

ORGAN CDS

J.S. Bach: Chorale Partitas
Stephen Farr, Aubertin House Organ Resonus Classics RES 10234

Jubilee – Music for Organ by Carson Cooman, vol.10
Erik Simmons, Mathis organ (1997/2006), SS Peter & Paul, Görlitz, produced via the Hauptwerk system Divine Art DDA 25185

Saint-Saëns: Symphony no.3 'Organ'
Paul Jacobs (org), Utah Symphony/Fischer Hyperion CDA 68201



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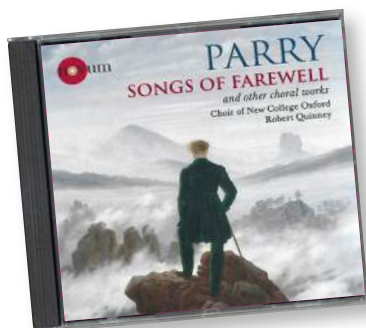
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REVIEWS

Rating: ★★★★★ Highly recommended ★★★★★ Very good ★★★ Good ★★ Average ★ Poor

STAR REVIEW



PARRY: SONGS OF FAREWELL AND OTHER CHORAL WORKS

Choir of New College Oxford, Timothy Wakerell (org) / Robert Quinney (dir)
Novum NCR1394 [78:43]

★★★★★

The centenary of Parry's death in 2018 has boosted his profile, with several significant performances and recordings of his music – and not just the familiar *Blest Pair of Sirens* and *I Was Glad*. There have been, for example, a clutch of new recordings of his late set of six

'A beautifully assembled and executed CD'

motets, *Songs of Farewell*, which forms the major feature of this new album from Robert Quinney and his excellent Choir of New College Oxford. The *Songs of Farewell* have been recorded using Quinney's new edition from Parry's manuscript in the Bodleian Library. His reading is near-perfectly judged, the choir's tone bright and full. Equally fine is *Hear my words, ye people*, which concludes with a metrical version of Psalm 150 familiar to most people as a hymn tune, while it's fascinating to hear an early and quite different version of 'There is an old belief'. The inclusion of Mendelssohn's *Sechs Sprüche* places Parry in a European context, and it's easy to hear the connections. This beautifully assembled and executed CD concludes with organist Timothy Wakerell's authoritative rendition of Parry's 'Wanderer' Toccata & Fugue.

PHILIP REED

▼ Robert Quinney conducts the Choir of New College Oxford



THIS ISSUE'S REVIEWERS

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Jeremy Jackman

Chris Bragg

Rupert Gough

Douglas Hollick

Brian Morton

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ORGAN CDS

◀ THE GRAND ORGAN OF THE TEMPLE CHURCH

Roger Sayer (org)

Orchid Classics ORC 100090 [74:15]

★★★★★



This recording provides compelling evidence that large organs by Harrison & Harrison really do project the romantic repertoire very well. The programme of Mendelssohn's first Sonata, Karg-Elert's kaleidoscopic Symphonic Chorale 'Jesu, meine Freude', Reger's *Hallelujah! Gott zu loben* (written for Karl Straube) and Reubke's *Sonata on the 94th Psalm* all demonstrate a wide range of colourful tonal resources and dynamic contrasts, expertly controlled by Roger Sayer. Details of the organ are not given, and the notes on the music are brief, but the performances are authoritative, with appropriately flexible tempi and an empathy with 19th-century style, well projected.

DAVID PONSFORD

OLIVIER MESSIAEN: LA NATIVITÉ DU SEIGNEUR

Richard Gowers, King's College Cambridge

Kings College Recordings KGS 0025 [67:40]

★★★★



'Dieu parmi nous' has regularly brought to a close the King's College Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols since the 1960s, and here lies the logic behind Messiaen's *La Nativité* forming the first organ recording on King's College's own label. The piece

which has now become a Christmas classic sounds suitably magisterial in the hands of former organ scholar Richard Gowers, with the familiar King's acoustics wrapping around the exotic sounds of the Christmas narrative. While the newly restored instrument sounds more vibrant than before, I find Gowers's rendition a little sterile in places, lacking the poetic nature of many other recordings available.

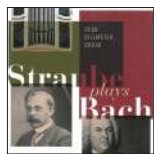
RUPERT GOUGH

STRAUBE PLAYS BACH

Dean Billmeyer, Sauer organs in the Michaeliskirche, Leipzig (1904), and the Evangelischen Stadtkirche, Bad Salzungen (1909)

Rondeau ROP 614546 (2CDs) [63:09; 67:26]

★★★★★



The musical source for this recording is Karl Straube's edition of ten Preludes & Fugues, published in 1913, which, as Christopher Anderson states in his informative liner notes, offers an 'excruciating degree of detail': fingering, pedalling,

tempi, phrasing, touch, dynamics, registration, supplemented by a plethora of footnotes. Dean Billmeyer has recreated Straube's interpretations on restored organs by Wilhelm Sauer. Presumably, the microphone position is situated far back to capture the enormous power of these organs, aiding smooth crescendi and diminuendi through the stops. This is a real time machine, often with slow tempi, but a kaleidoscope of romantic organ colour.

DAVID PONSFORD

THEMA MIT VARIATIONEN

Richard Brasier, Kenneth Tickell organ (2003), St Laurence, Upminster Ravensbury RRCD 0181 [66:51]

★★★★



On this CD, Richard Brasier presents works by Byrd, Rogg, J.S. and C.P.E. Bach, Schumann, Mendelssohn and Rinck. It is nice to hear one of Kenneth Tickell's parish church organs, a fine colourful instrument, albeit in dry acoustics.

Brasier is here more at home with the later repertoire. The Bach Passacaglia is registered with many piston changes of stops, a halt before the Fugue (where Bach writes to carry though continuously), and a sudden large dynamic change in the middle of the Fugue – all detrimental to the structure of this work. The two Rogg *Études* are very effective, with clean and precise playing, and Brasier's interpretation of the Schumann *Sketches* is a delight. It is welcome to have a set of variations by Rinck, a composer whose music we should hear much more.

DOUGLAS HOLLICK

J.S. BACH: TOCCATAS, PRELUDES & FUGUES (BWV NOS. 565, 578, 545, 767, 534, 550, 546, 532, 579, 540, 766, 536, 543, 544)

Kåre Nordstoga, St Johannis, Lüneburg

Lawo LWC 1153 (2CDs) [65:47; 73:02]

★★★★★



The organ of St Johannis, Lüneburg, is an exceptionally fine instrument. It contains a significant amount of old pipework from Niehoff, Stellwagen and Dropa, and was restored in the original cases by Beckerath in 1976. This is the

organ, before the addition of the pedal towers by Dropa in 1715, that Böhm played, and on which he no doubt taught the teenage J.S. Bach. Superbly recorded and faithful to both clarity and the large acoustics, this organ sings, even in the plenos with maybe 20 ranks of mixture work! Kåre Nordstoga is a fine player with a natural feeling for tempo and articulation to match the acoustics, and an excellent sense of style; these are very fine performances. There are ten Toccatas, Preludes & Fugues here, plus the little Fugue in G minor and the Fugue on a theme of Corelli. Wonderful varied plenos, gentle singing principals, and some ravishing flutes and reeds all make for a very satisfying whole. The programme for each disc is divided by a chorale partita, allowing Nordstoga to use many of the lovely quieter registers not heard in the large works. An ideal match of music, organ and performer. Highly recommended.

DOUGLAS HOLLICK

JOHN KITCHEN PLAYS BRITISH LIGHT MUSIC

John Kitchen, Usher Hall, Edinburgh

Delphian DCD 34212 [69:52]

★★★★★



John Kitchen's delightful recording pays homage to cinema organ talent Michael Thomson. His entertaining compositions with titles such as *Whirly-Granny* present British light music at its best. There is a Scottish flavour to many of these

character pieces and a clever incorporation of multiple melodic references in pieces like *A bouquet of roses*. Alongside this, Kitchen's own transcriptions of Arthur Sullivan opera movements complement well. The Usher Hall Organ is naturally well-suited to this repertoire, easily transporting the listener back to an era of Edwardian opulence and entertainment.

RUPERT GOUGH

UNE VOIX FRANÇAISE

Renée Anne Louprette, Mander organ (1993), St Ignatius Loyola, New York City

Acis APL 01609 [69:58]

★★★★★



Having previously served as associate director of music, Renée Anne Louprette is no stranger to St Ignatius Loyola in New York and its French-inspired instrument from British firm Mander. She returns with an exciting recording of French repertoire. The second suite of Vierne's *Pièces de fantaisie* sits alongside some less familiar pieces by Ibert, André Isoir and Nadia Boulanger. Isoir's only organ composition, *Variations sur un psaume huguenot*, is a particularly vibrant exploration of neo-baroque sounds. Louprette plays with grace and charm as well as seemingly effortless virtuosity. Twenty-five years since its installation, this organ still captivates with its uniquely French voice in New York.

RUPERT GOUGH

LEONARD SANDERMAN, ORGEL

Joachim Wagner organ (1737), Liebfrauenkirche, Jüterbog; Johann Tobias Turley organ (1824), Dorfkirche, Kaltenborn Orgelstadt Jüterbog, vol.1 [66:58]

★★★



The historic organs are the most important feature of this disc, on which the tonal colours are well exploited in a programme of Buxtehude, Hassler (two first recordings from the Turin Tablature Book), Böhm, Weckmann, Reinken, J.S. Bach (BWV 537 and four 'lesser' chorale preludes from *Clavierübung III*), Krebs and Johann Schneider (1702-88, first recording). Leonard Sanderman's articulation is well schooled, although phrases sometimes lack forward direction, as in Bach's C minor Fantasia which lacks gravitas and tension. More imagination is shown in Schneider's Praeludium, and some beautiful sounds come from the Wagner organ. No notes on the music, unfortunately.

DAVID PONSFORD

GRIEG AND TVEITT FOR ORGAN

Nils Henrik Asheim, Stavanger Concert Hall Lawo LWC 1151 [71:37]

★★★★★



It is interesting to note recently how organists are turning to transcriptions to demonstrate new concert hall organs. This premiere recording of the new Ryde & Berg organ in Stavanger's concert hall is no exception, and Nils Henrik Asheim turns

primarily to Norway's national treasure: Edvard Grieg. Asheim successfully transforms the piano *Ballad in the form of variations on a Norwegian folksong* into a colourful musical tableau. The other composer featured, Grieg Tveitt, was born the year after Grieg's death. Some of his orchestral *Hardanger Tunes* are arranged here, and these fun character pieces continue to paint a musical picture of this region of Norway and its folk traditions.

RUPERT GOUGH

HAMPSON SISLER – ALL AROUND THE YEAR: ORGAN MUSIC FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Michael Koenig, E.M. Skinner/Klais organ (1930/2013), Ev. Saalkirche, Ingelheim am Rhein, Germany

MSR Classics MS1666 [48:17]

★★★



Hampson Sisler (b.1932) was the youngest ever recipient of the FAGO diploma, and has enjoyed a distinguished career as a church musician and widely published and recorded composer. The suites presented here each consist of a sequence of scenes evoking celebrations of family members and of moments in the church year which have become gradually secularised (St Valentine's Day, St Patrick's Day etc). Each improvisatory tableau is infused with melodies associated with the feast day referred to in the title. The melodies themselves spring from a variety of sources: Lutheran, Baptist and Anglican hymn tunes, popular American songs of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, music of Japan and of native America. These themes, generally appearing in off-colour harmonic contexts, are more 'referenced' than developed in any systematic way, some canonic writing notwithstanding, and the listener is left with a sense that this could be incidental music to a film or a play. The London-based Austrian organist Michael König (whose biography is unduly modest regarding his pioneering work to champion the organ in Africa) plays splendidly and with the sense of orchestral colour and control required by the unique, sizeable 1930 Skinner now residing in Ingelheim am Rhein.

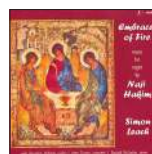
CHRIS BRAGG

HAKIM: EMBRACE OF FIRE

Simon Leach, William Hill organ, Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Manchester; Benedict Holland (vn), John Turner (rec), Randal McCusker (t)

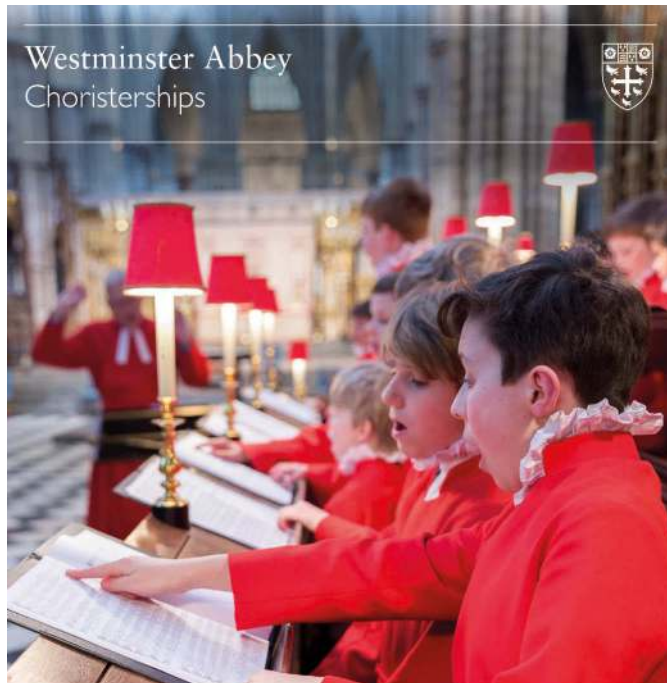
Métier MSV 28583 [70:43]

★★★★★



Simon Leach departs from Manchester's Holy Name of Jesus church for pastures new in Edinburgh with an entertaining, quietly virtuosic tribute to long-time collaborator Naji Hakim. Of interest is the title track – with its blend of plainsong, Hindu scales and irregular rhythms seamlessly integrated by Leach and an expressive 1871 III/48 William Hill – and a first recording of the *Toccata on the Introit for the Feast of the Epiphany* (2016), where a plainsong introduction gives way to a rich set of symphonic variations culminating in blazing splendour. Works pairing organ with recorder and violin are fully engaging and

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◀ beautifully realised. The more I hear of Hakim's organ music, the more it casts a spell.

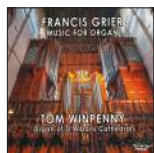
MICHAEL QUINN

FRANCIS GRIER: MUSIC FOR ORGAN

Tom Winpenny, Harrison & Harrison organ, St Albans Cathedral;
Lay Clerks of St Albans Cathedral

Willowhayne Records WHR 051 [75:35]

★★★★★



This first disc devoted to the organ music of Francis Grier (b.1955) boasts seven premiere recordings. The earliest, 1989's *Vigilia Noctis*, was also Grier's first for the instrument, an atmospheric work sculpted from variant finger-and-foot work carried by contrasted rhythms. The same year's *Sonata* is multi-faceted technically and emotionally, and wholly characteristic of Grier's chiaroscuro complexity. Accented with classical and contemporary French accents, *Te Deum* (1996) prefaces expressive organ passages with plainchant canticles. The beautiful twinning of two *In nomine* settings (2000) deftly interpolates John Taverner and William Bytheman. Tom Winpenny is a persuasive advocate on St Albans's robust but poetic Harrison & Harrison.

MICHAEL QUINN

RHAPSODIES & ELEGIES

Damin Spritzer, Willis organ (1892), Hereford Cathedral
Raven OAR 156 [78:24]

★★★★★

HEREFORD EXPERIENCE

Douglas Tang, Willis organ (1892), Hereford Cathedral
Willowhayne Records WHR 044 [71:59]

★★



The Willis organ at Hereford has largely retained its distinctive tonal characteristics despite some subsequent revisions. Like any historic organ of unequivocal

quality, it has a strong personality and demands to be taken on its own terms. The American Damin Spritzer understands this instinctively. Her programme of English late romantic rhapsodies fits the instrument like a glove and her attention to detail in managing seamless crescendi and diminuendi, and showing off the panoply of solo colours, is no less than brilliant. If the repertoire, by Alec Rowley, Harold Darke, Ernest Bullock, Harvey Grace and others, is occasionally reminiscent of Beecham's famous adage that 'the English may not like music, but they absolutely love the noise it makes', Spritzer's strongly characterised interpretations and the sumptuous sound captured by Christoph Frommen make this highly enjoyable.

Douglas Tang's disc, by comparison, too often strays into 'painting by numbers'. Nearly 10 minutes each of Marchand and Bruhns is a curious and uncomfortable choice of repertoire, and the metronomic interpretation of Mendelssohn's Sixth Sonata is at odds with the contemporary descriptions of Mendelssohn's own organ playing. The choruses employed too often terminate in the

incongruous quint mixtures added in 1978, rather than the original surviving tierce mixtures, which are such an inherent part of Willis's style. Only in the Howells set 2 no.1 *Psalm Prelude* and Whitlock's *Plymouth Suite* does the organ sound at all happy. For all Tang's digital dexterity, and despite the much broader variety of repertoire, Spritzer's disc demonstrates far more of the organ's potential. For the real 'Hereford Experience', hers is the disc to have.

CHRIS BRAGG

CHORAL CDS

HANDEL: ODE FOR ST CECILIA'S DAY

Carolyn Sampson (s), Ian Bostridge (t), Polish Radio Choir, Dunedin Consort / John Butt (dir)

Linn Records CKD 578 [61:15]

★★★★★



Fabulously expressive word-painting from stellar soloists, including some very Italian English from Ian Bostridge, meets playing of the most vivacious sprightliness, richly-toned, high-octane singing from combined UK and Polish forces, and great

clarity, immediacy and warmth of recorded sound in this outstanding release. Performed as Handel might have done with a concerto grosso (op.6, no.4 in A minor), it encapsulates perfectly the questing intellect of the Age of Enlightenment, exploring the delicious, wondrous miracle of music – a lovelier, more joyful performance seems unimaginable.

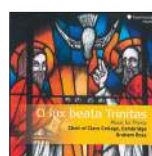
REBECCA TAVENER

O LUX BEATA TRINITAS: MUSIC FOR TRINITY

Choir of Clare College, Cambridge, Nicholas Morris and Eleanor Carter (org) / Graham Ross (dir)

Harmonia mundi HMM 902270 [74:56]

★★★★★



This disc concludes Graham Ross and the Choir of Clare College's musical survey of the church's liturgical year, which began in 2013 with the Advent season. The focus here is Trinity, and Ross has compiled a typically eclectic selection of

music ranging from Sheppard's *Libera nos, salva nos I & II* to contemporary pieces by MacMillan and Jackson. It's good to hear Britten's 1944 *Festival Te Deum* for once, rather than his earlier 1934 C major setting. And there are two world premiere recordings: Ross's *Duo Seraphim* (2017) with its antiphonal exchanges, and *Tres sunt* by Joshua Pacey, a former composition student of Ross. Clare College's mixed voiced choir sounds completely at home in this programme, whether in English church music by Stanford and Stainer or some resonant pieces from the Russian Orthodox tradition – I particularly enjoyed Grechaninov's *Cherubic Hymn*. The CD offers warm-toned, nicely blended, attractive choral singing throughout. Anyone who is familiar with Ross and his work at Clare College will need this gorgeous CD for their collection.

PHILIP REED

◀ MANUEL CARDOSO: REQUIEM, LAMENTATIONS, MAGNIFICAT & MOTETS

Cupertinos / Luís Toscano (dir)

Hyperion CDA 68252 [69:34]

★★★★★



Tenderness, solemnity, and profound feeling for the text inform this emotionally saturated performance. The ten voices are directed from within by tenor Luís Toscano, whose intimate knowledge of every note (having edited all these works) glows throughout. Wonderfully direct tone with admirable dynamic range, this is surely the finest Iberian vocal consort yet to emerge. The Requiem setting is the lesser-known one for four voices, and lively, pellucid recorded sound in the ample acoustics of the Basilica do Bom Jesus do Monte crowns this celebration of Cardoso's originality. Portuguese polyphony sung by Portuguese voices – it couldn't be more authentic.

REBECCA TAVENER

SNOW QUEENS

Juice Vocal Ensemble: Anna Snow (s), Sarah Dacey (s), Kerry Andrew (a)
Resonus RES 10224 [53:54]

★★★★★



My mind immediately jumped to *A Mind of Winter*, George Benjamin's setting of Wallace Stevens's *The Snow Man*, which would have been a delightfully challenging arrangement for this programme of hivernal songs by (mostly) very

young composers. Juice always do exciting and original work, sometimes at the cost of missing the obvious. They come somewhere between art music and the likes of the Unthanks, or even the Roches. Kerry Andrew's own *Apples, Plums, Cherries* is a delightful opener and Anna Snow's arrangement of the *Coventry Carol (Lulla Lulla)* is a quietly unexpected stunner. The standouts, though, are Phil Maguire's */SOUCH/DRON/HUM*, a virtuosic play on onomatopoeic wind sounds and fx, and (just when you thought you couldn't take another version of it) Chris Warner's dark and bitter arrangement of 'Blow, blow, thou winter wind' from *As You Like It*. A winter's entertainment ...

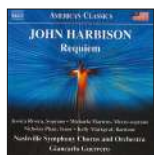
BRIAN MORTON

JOHN HARBISON: REQUIEM

Jessica Riviera (s), Michaela Martens (m-s), Nicholas Phelan (t), Kelly Markgraf (bar), Nashville Symphony Chorus, Nashville Symphony / Giancarlo Guerrero (dir)

Naxos 8.559841 [54:34]

★★★★★



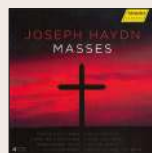
Playing at just under an hour, John Harbison's Requiem was written over a period of 17 years and completed in 2002 in the wake of 9/11. As the composer observes, it aspires to have 'a sense of the inexorability of the passage of time, for good and ill, of the commonality of love and loss.' Harbison sets the traditional words of the *Missa pro Defunctis* and resists the temptation to introduce other texts as so many composers have

HAYDN: MASSES – MISSA CELLENSIS, MISSA BREVIS IN F, 'NELSON' MASS, 'CREATION' MASS, 'HARMONIE' MASS, 'HEILIG' MASS, 'THERESA' MASS, MASS IN TIME OF WAR

Gächinger Kantorei Stuttgart, Orpheus Choir Munich, Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Bach-Collegium Stuttgart, Oregon Bach Festival Chorus, Oregon Bach Festival Orchestra, Neue Hofkapelle Munich / Gerd Guglhör, Helmut Rilling, Owen Burdick (dirs)

Hänssler Classics HC15017 (4CDs) [74:42; 79:09; 76:29; 75:34]

★★★★★



Haydn's late Masses are among the crowning glories of his illustrious career: symphonic in scope and form, imaginatively scored, and varied in instrumentation. It now seems extraordinary that Haydn lavished on them

such care for them to be heard in the chapel at Esterházy, often in a liturgical context. They have long been popular with choral societies up and down the land, for the Masses are modest in their technical difficulty yet challenging enough in their stylistic requirements to be rewarding to singers. This set of four discs gathers together all the late Masses, together with one of the earlier shorter Masses (in F major). Hänssler Classics have drawn on their back catalogue for the set – the recordings date from between 1992 and 2008 – with the lion's share going to the veteran master choral conductor Helmut Rilling, whose forces range geographically between Stuttgart and the Oregon Bach Festival, both of which he has been associated with for many years.

As might be expected, Rilling's interpretative values represent a solidly middle-of-the-road view of Haydn. He may not use period instruments, but the choirs don't sound generous in size, and instrumental and vocal phrasing is always stylish. Indeed, what is striking throughout is the clarity of the choral and orchestral textures that Rilling draws from his performers, whether in Germany or the United States. Tempi are consistently well judged, never extreme nor exaggerated. Rilling's soloists, while not front-rank international artists, are all more than suited to the purpose in hand: indeed, soprano Letizia Scherrer gives an exceptionally fine account of the taxing coloratura in the 'Nelson' Mass.

Two other groups and conductors contribute to the set: Gerd Guglhör and his Munich forces for the *Missa Cellensis*, and Owen Burdick and the Choir of Trinity Church Wall Street and the REBEL Baroque Orchestra for the F major *Missa brevis*. While neither conductor has quite the command of Rilling – how could they, given Rilling's long engagement with this music? – both make decent contributions to the venture, with Guglhör especially eloquent in the C major *Missa brevis*. The recorded sound is as uncluttered as the readings of the music. While Hickox or Gardiner might play up the inherent drama of this music more than Rilling and his cohorts do, anyone looking for recordings of these Masses should be well satisfied with this set.

PHILIP REED

done since Britten's *War Requiem*. Balancing the ritual and the personal in an expressive and accessible musical language, the work reveals throughout Harbison's sensitivity to the meaning of the text. The Nashville Symphony Chorus has really grasped the measure of this music and delivers a compelling account, with exemplary diction, bundles of rhythmic energy when needed, and even tone. Together with four excellent soloists, Giancarlo Guerrero and his Nashville forces deliver a first-rate performance of the piece.

PHILIP REED

JEAN-PAUL DESSY: REQUIEMS; TWO PIECES FOR SOLO CELLO

Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, Tallinn Chamber Orchestra, Jean-Paul Dessy (vc) / Risto Joost (dir)
Cypres CYP 4652 [46:52]

★★★★★



Belgian composer and cellist Jean-Paul Dessy (b.1963) views concerts (and presumably recordings) as liturgy – playing an instrument is a means of meditating, with composition as a kind of prophecy and sound itself as a revelation. His seven-movement *Requiem*s is not a conventional Requiem setting: rather, it takes texts chosen by the writer-theologian Jean-Yves Leloup from different spiritual traditions. Recorded live in January 2018, the Estonian Philharmonic Choir and Tallinn Chamber Orchestra conducted by Risto Joost give a moving account of this largely contemplative, gentle work, which often engenders a hypnotic quality. Dessy is the soloist in the pieces for solo cello.

PHILIP REED

TOIVO TULEV: MAGNIFICAT, ET AL

Inga Martinsone (s), Ieva Ezeriete (s), Ka Bo Chan (c-t), Latvian Radio Choir, Tallinn Chamber Orchestra, Virgo Veldi (alto sax), Age Juurikas (org), Helgo Rosin and Vambola Krigul (perc) / Kaspars Putniņš (dir)
Naxos 8.573735 [61:18]

★★★★★



Define 'soulful' singing? Not so easy to pin down, but now at least you could simply play someone this Estonian choir's new CD of mostly first-time recordings, and you'd have a pretty clear idea what was meant. This year marks Toivo Tulev's

50th birthday. His recent path, up to the astonishing *Magnificat* of 2013 has been less about music-as-technique and all about music as spiritual journey. The Latvian Radio Choir are featured on four pieces, bracketing the disc with the glorious *Suvinen Vihm* ('Summer Rain') and the long, closing *Magnificat*, which restores something of the giddy excitement that belongs (surely? Mary has just been acknowledged as the future Mother of God) to that Marian text, but which usually gets buried in solemnity. By contrast, there is the weightless *Tanto gentile*, a modal/microtonal piece written for Putniņš and the LRC, and the starkly declamatory *Flow My Tears*. A truly remarkable recording, and yes, soulfully done.

BRIAN MORTON

ALFRED JANSON: THE WIND BLOWS

Norwegian Soloists' Choir, Alfred Janson (melodica), various other instruments / Grete Pedersen (dir)

BIS 2341 SACD [66:28]

★★★★★



Alfred Janson (b.1937) was one of the first Norwegian composers to drag his country's music out of the bitter uncertainty that was the legacy of discredited nationalism and a degree of creative 'collaborationism'. Janson was shaped by jazz, which explains the improvisational freedom of his melodica introduction to *Tre dikt av Ebba Lindqvist* and to the album. The device appears again in a choral reworking of the mighty *Construction* and in *Ky og vakre Madam Ky*, a Harald Sverdrup haiku that recasts the Vietnam war as a single, deceptive block print of rosy cloud and dangerous wind. The latter is a favourite Janson trope: it features on the title piece, with yet more melodica. Elsewhere, the texts are biblical or Shakespearean, or from Emily Dickinson in the case of *Sarabande*, a poem not so much about mortality as about how hard it is to fit life into the short term we're given. Janson is hugely important in Norwegian music, and Grete Pedersen approaches him with concentration, respect and much affection.

BRIAN MORTON

REJOICE! (STANFORD, PÄRT, MACMILLAN, HOWELLS, MESSIAEN, IVES, BRITTEN)

Bachchor Salzburg, Wolfgang Kogert (org) / Alois Glassner (dir)
Gramola 99156 [57:50]

★★★★★



This agreeable programme contains a few predictable choices – Stanford's *For lo, I raise up* and Messiaen's *O sacrum convivium* – but there is also the uniquely explorative Charles Ives setting of *Psalm 135*, written around 1900. The Bachchor Salzburg express the text well with attention to detail, and their performance of Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb* produces some of the best articulated singing I've heard. Arvo Pärt's *Beatus vir* is not so successful: in order to produce a long *crescendo* the *pianissimo* singing practically disappears into nothing (maybe a recording problem), and the basses could be more resonant. Nevertheless it is an interesting anthology.

SHIRLEY RATCLIFFE

MAREK RACZYŃSKI: MEDIA VITA

Media Vita Project Choir, Poznański Chór, Minimus Vocal Ensemble, Sołacz Chamber Choir / Bartosz Michałowski, Sławomira Raczyńska, Marianna Majchrzak (dirs)

Recart 0022 [50:38]

★★★★★



Marek Raczynski's sacred canon often seems to engage in a very direct way with some central mystery, investing the music with an evanescent, sometimes elusive character. Then, he can surprise you with something like *Laudate Dominum*, which seems almost folkishly plain in its expression of praise. It's intended ▶



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as, and sounds like, an international, even universal, hymn ('Laudate eum omnes populi'). These performances were recorded by four different choirs, but only in two locations and with a clear sense of what voices were needed for each piece, which means the set has real coherence: a glimpse into the mind of an important modern, whose understanding of the tradition is total.

BRIAN MORTON

SIGISMUND NEUKOMM: MISSA SOLEMNIS*; REQUIEM**; FUNERAL MARCH

*Chœur de Chambre de Namur; **Cantataréunion, Ensemble vocal de l'Océan Indien, La Grande Écurie et la Chambre du Roy / Jean-Claude Malgoire (dir)

Accent ACC 24344 (2CDs) [71:30; 59:25]

★★★

RESONANCES OF WATERLOO (NEUKOMM: REQUIEM À LA MÉMOIRE DE LOUIS XVI, ET AL)

St Salvator's Chapel Choir, University of St Andrews, Ian Bousfield (tromb), The Wallace Collection / Tom Wilkinson and Anthony George (dirs)

Sanctiandree SAND 0007 [71:23]

★★★★



Neukomm would be largely forgotten if it weren't for Jean-Claude Malgoire (a true believer), who has also recorded an earlier Requiem, written for Prince

Talleyrand in memory of the guillotined Louis XVI (and premiered with Salieri as co-conductor). The *Missa solennis*, one of 50 Masses that he composed in a long career, was for John VI of Portugal and



EARLY MUSIC

REBECCA TAVENER ROUNDS
UP THE LATEST RELEASES

This musical and spiritual journey begins with the opening chords of John Cooke's *Stella celi extirpevit* as the male voices of the

Binchois Consort present **The Lily & the Rose** [Hyperion CDA 68228], an anthology of late medieval Marian adorations 'in sound and stone', including works by Dunstaple, Frye and lesser-known composers. Exceptional moments of emotional intensity bloom within refined, expert, lofty singing of polyphony and chant in frigid acoustics. On the subject of difficult acoustics overcome, trebles on top burnish a sparkingly numinous patina over **William Mundy: Sacred Choral Music** [Delphian DCD 34204] from the Choir of St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh. Duncan Ferguson moulds fervent interpretations from both choir and solo ensembles, with lovely long lines, commitment, and a spiritual freshness. Here is febrile musical evangelism for Mary Tudor's Roman Catholic revival, including some premiere recordings, captured with magnificent clarity and acoustic bloom. This disc culminates with Mundy's collaboration with Byrd, so here's the great man himself, sung by the Choir of King's College, Cambridge, in a disc of 19 **Byrd Motets** [KGS 0024] exploring the liturgical year. Into their vast acoustics they hurl powerful, driven, colourful interpretations with a galvanised vocal presence that some may find combative.

Byrd receives sinuously sumptuous treatment in **The Path to Paradise** [Sony 19075801822] as the 32-strong Trinity Choir from Canada spread their considerable wingspan in romantic readings of works by Tallis, Shepherd, Gombert, Lassus, Allegri (yes, *that* Psalm), and Arvo Pärt. Broad vistas of eternity open in Daniel Taylor's stately interpretations, majestically sustained, with strength and delicacy in balance, taking deliciously mournful effect. Speaking of sumptuous sound, this might be a good moment to mention **Tallis: The Votive Antiphons** [Hyperion CDA 68250], a compilation of seven sung by The Cardinal's Music, recorded between 2005 and

2016, reissued in a new programme: a winner due to the stature of the original recordings, reviews of which grace the back of the jewel-case, with brilliance guaranteed.

The 25 male voices of De Profundis specialise in low-pitch performances of renaissance polyphony, and for **Sebastian de Vivanco Missa Assumpsit Jesus** [Hyperion CDA 68257] the Mass is sung with appropriate plainsong propers and the programme completed by a clutch of motets. This insightful exploration of Vivanco's rarely heard polyphony is often gloriously sonorous, and the bajón reed bass adds pleasingly unusual grain to an inconsistent performance where much vivacity, vim and vigour is occasionally compromised by enervating tempi and intonation issues.

Now for three Monteverdi releases. On **Scherzi Musicali a tre voci 1607** [Tactus TC 561309] six female singers of L'Esa Ensemble throw themselves with ecstatically Italophone authenticity, failing to blend, and their intonation is the stuff of nightmares. A shame because, in spite of a brittle recording, the delightfully jaunty playing of a variety of instruments by the Baschenis Ensemble is perfectly stylish and pleasing. A double CD of **Monteverdi Madrigali Libri V & VI** [Brilliant Classics 95659] offers more refined repertoire in thoughtful, well-constructed performances by Le Nuove Musiche from the Netherlands, managing fair but inconsistent Italian, delicacy of feeling and lovely clarity of recorded sound. Finally, to add to the pre-existing shelfload, here's another **Vespro della Beata Vergine** [Ramée RAM 1702]. Ludas Modalis proffer a version without concertato instruments which they contend is not only a 'first' but also a format the composer himself proposed. The result offers much spiritual probity, with excellent, virtuoso singing supported only by continuo instruments. Liturgical points are awarded for the antiphons in this less calorific, even introspective – but fulfilling in more devotional ways – recording: a fascinating alternative for those who prefer the balance between liturgy and opera to favour the former.

Rebecca Tavener is a singer and director specialising in early and contemporary music. She is founder-director of Canty, Scotland's only professional medieval music group.

◀ premiered in Rio de Janeiro in 1818, which gives some sense of where the composer's political sympathies may have lain. Perhaps this is why he is forgotten. The music always seems to strain for courtly effect and grandeur, but is often betrayed by wobbly architecture and too much gilt. The St Andrews singers and conductors give a convincing interpretation of the earlier Mass, the main piece and the only choral work on this historically themed set, which centres on the Congress of Vienna and the wholesale reconstruction of Europe: hardly a *recherché* theme in 2018! Also on the disc are two pieces for trombone and brass ensemble – Ernst Sachse's *Concertino* in B flat major and Alexandre Guilmant's *Morceau Symphonique* – plus the Adagio from Jean Bellon's *Quintette no.12*. An intriguing and unexpected selection.

BRIAN MORTON

LEST WE FORGET

Choir of Chichester Cathedral, Timothy Ravalde (org) / Charles Harrison (org/dir)
Signum SIGCD 562 [64:56]

★★★★

FOR THE FALLEN – CHORAL MUSIC FROM THE TIME OF THE GREAT WAR

Pegasus Choir, Martin Toyer (org) / Matthew Altham (dir)
Signum SIGCD 825 [67:19]

★★★★

IN REMEMBRANCE

Gareth Brynmor John (bar), Chapel Choir of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, Chelsea Pensioners' Choir, James Orford and Hugh Rowlands (org) / William Vann (dir)
SommCD 0187 [80:30]

★★★



Across the centuries there has always been conflict and a terrible human price is paid. The creative artists of the world respond eloquently, and by words and music offer comfort and solace to those who are left behind to pick up the pieces. The catalyst for these CDs is the centenary year of the Armistice of 1918 but they are more than a centenary commemoration: they are a reminder and remembrance of every war, as indicated in the poignant title of the first CD, **Lest We Forget**. This well thought-out anthology from composers affected by the Great War includes works by Stanford, Bainton, Ireland, Howells, Parry, Holst and Elgar. Apart from Peter Aston, these composers had first-hand knowledge of the war itself, and the settings are moving, poignant and sometimes dramatic. Aston's *So they gave their bodies*, with slight echoes of the Last Post, is a sympathetic addition. The talented

SAMUEL ADLER: A PROPHECY OF PEACE

Amanda Dawn Ortolani (s), Estelle Cole (a), Richard Cragg (t), Kathy Schuman (cantor), Gloriam Dei Cantores, James Jordan and Sharon Rose Pfeiffer (org), Evangeline Ingwersen (fl), Synergy Brass Quintet, Gloriam Dei Ringers (bells) / Elizabeth C. Patterson (dir)
Paraclete GD CD 129 [67:37]

★★★★



The important thing to note about Samuel Adler is that he composes within the Judaeo-Christian tradition, and not just the more familiar church line. This is most obvious on *Lchah Dodi* and *Mah Tov*, but also in the ecumenical Mass

Transfiguration which is the centrepiece of the set, magnificently sung by the Gloriam Dei Cantores and by soloists Srs Amanda Dawn

Choir of Chichester Cathedral, with its confident and gifted young trebles, gives devout performances of the music, complemented by the sympathetic playing of organist Timothy Ravalde. Director and organist Charles Harrison performs with great flair Howells's graphic *Rhapsody no.3* in C sharp minor, op. 17, written during a Zeppelin raid on York, and Stanford's 'Verdun', from *Sonata no.2 'Eroica'*.

It is good to see an appearance of Douglas Guest, whose finely honed **For the Fallen** is the opening track on a disc of composers including Charles Wood, Max Reger, Ravel, Rachmaninov and Mahler. Stationed at Verdun, Ravel wrote the music and text for *Trois beaux oiseaux du Paradis* reflecting on the contrasting realities of war. Two movements from Rachmaninov's *All-Night Vigil* with excellent soloists show the Pegasus Choir at its most expressive, and they give an impassioned performance. Of the English contingent, both George Dyson and Ivor Gurney served in the Great War and suffered from shell-shock. Gurney's fervent motet for double choir *Since I Believe in God the Father Almighty* expresses his feelings about the inhumanity of war. Walford Davies's *A Short Requiem*, based on biblical texts, was written in memory of the fallen. The Pegasus Choir perform with great purity of tone which is often at the expense of the text, but the singers have a large expressive range which they use to great effect.

In Remembrance offers consolation to those who are left, and gives a timely reminder that the first world war's dream was of a peaceful future. The text of Ireland's moving *Greater Love Hath No Man* offered comfort to the bereaved, as did Elgar's *They are at rest*. Holst's *Ode to Death*, written in memory of his lost friends, is given a heartfelt performance by the Chapel Choir of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, who sing with touching sincerity. They are joined by the Chelsea Pensioners' Choir for rousing performances of *Jerusalem* and *I vow to thee, my country*. The only performance where the Chapel Choir is rather pedestrian is in Faure's *Requiem*: this wonderfully ethereal work lost some of its magic by not flowing enough. Nevertheless, this is a lovely programme which gives one food for thought.

SHIRLEY RATCLIFFE

Otolani (who entirely merits her name) and Estelle Cole. Wonderful, too, to hear bells used as they should be used, to communicate joy. Adler's intense spirituality comes out in every single performance and the acoustics of the Church of the Transfiguration in Orleans, Maine – all that pale limestone! – are perfect for this music.

BRIAN MORTON

BRAHMS: EIN DEUTSCHES REQUIEM (CHAMBER VERSION)

Natasha Schnur (s), Matt Sullivan (bar), Yale Schola Cantorum / David Hill (dir)

Hyperion CDA 68242 [66:21]

★★★★★



This chamber orchestration by Iain Farrington of Brahms's Requiem – for string soloists, three wind players and piano – is a revelation. Perceptively reflective, it reveals a work of intense, lyrical beauty where voices are enhanced by the instrumentation.

It is the antithesis of the authoritative performances of the past, so

when the drama is revealed it is all the more powerful. The text, taken from the Lutheran Bible, was considered by Brahms as a Requiem 'of Humankind': it is of people, not of power. David Hill's reading of the score is intimate and sensitive, giving the music a lyrical, flowing beauty. The very talented Yale Schola Cantorum, soloists and instrumentalists respond to his baton for a truly memorable performance.

SHIRLEY RATCLIFFE

BEAUTY COME DANCING (GORDON GETTY: CHORAL WORKS)

Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir /

James Gaffigan (dir)

Pentatone PTC5186 621 [57:32]

★★★



Most of these pieces are set to the composer's own poetry. Gordon Getty's music is fluent and lyrical, reminiscent of the first half of the 20th century; but when he gets a good idea, the choral lines are repeated continually and often have the quality of ▶



CHORAL SELECTION

A FRENCH ANTHOLOGY, AN UPPER-VOICE COLLECTION, AND THREE SECULAR PIECES FROM THE USA

Carus music publishers generally match clarity of purpose with clarity of music on the page, and their latest choral collection for mixed voices is no exception. **French Choral Music** (SSATB; Carus Musikverlag, conductor's score 2.311/01, €27.90, choral score 2.311/05, €12.50) offers under one cover 45 examples of sacred music from the 16th century to the present, some with and some without keyboard accompaniment. The editor and compiler is Denis Rouger, who holds appointments in Stuttgart and Paris. In his introductory notes, he expresses the hope that the items included here will encourage further exploration, and the compilation is set up to do just that. The pieces are ordered alphabetically by title and it is interesting to compare, side by side, settings of *Ave Verum* or *Kyrie* for example, from different eras of composition. There is a large-scale copy, described as 'conductor's score', which comes with a CD of some of the pieces, and a more handily-sized choral score: both are moderately priced. Much of the music is not difficult, and there are some real gems; *Tunc respexit Jesus Petrum* by Charpentier and Bouzignac's quirky setting of *Jubilate Deo* are personal favourites.

Another collection to catch my eye, ear and imagination is **As You Sing** (upper voices & pno; Oxford University Press ISBN 978-0-19-352421-7, £10.50), nine secular concert works for upper voices. The compilers here are Neil Ferris and Joanna Tomlinson. The items are all in English, but Ferris and Tomlinson have ranged far and wide in their search for top-quality music. Two pieces are a cappella, the rest have piano accompaniment. Toby Young's vibrant *Give me the River*

includes clapping and stamping, and Sarah Quartel's unaccompanied opener needs a hand drum. Kerry Andrew gives us *Charm* – i.e. 'spell' – which involves whispered incantation of the names of herbs in Old English: just the sort of thing youngsters will love.

The American composer Kirke Mechem has something of a reputation for writing capricious, witty pieces, and **Rules for Behaviour, 1787** (SATB & pno; G. Schirmer, Inc. HL 50601130, US\$2.50) is no exception. The text is an 18th-century set of church rules of conduct from Williamsburg, Virginia. Lightness of touch and ruthless accuracy will be needed from the SATB choir and the piano accompanist to make this work, but in this writer's view it will be worth the hard work involved.

Edgar Allen Poe's macabre love poem **Annabel (Lee)** (SATB (div); Mark Foster Music 00278072, US\$2.50) has been given a sensitive setting by another American composer, Timothy Takach. He might have written 'Allegretto con spirito' at the top of page 1; he didn't. Instead he offers 'Vehement'. I like the idea that the singers should have a touch of anger about the delivery of this sharply drawn partsong. The musical language is not particularly difficult in a folksy, post-Vaughan Williams fashion, and Takach skilfully sets the text in such a way that the words should be clearly audible. Handy for Hallowe'en?

I love Carol Barnett's new composition for SATB and harp, **Tagore's Lost Star** (SATB (div) & hp; G. Schirmer, Inc. 50601113, US\$2.75). The harp part is uncomplicated but idiomatic, and creates the perfect backdrop for Barnett to explore a musical world that fuses western and Indian traditions of melody and rhythm. Five and a half minutes of pure enchantment.

After an early career as a freelance choral director and counter-tenor, Jeremy Jackman was a member of the King's Singers for ten years. In 1990 he resumed a career in conducting and leading workshops. He is currently musical director of the English Baroque Choir, and the Cecilian Singers in Leicester. www.jeremyjackman.co.uk

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◀ a recitative. Where the interest comes is in Getty's flair for orchestration which colours his writing; chorally the thematic material is sparse. He has a sense of humour, as the setting of Keats's *There was a naughty boy* shows, and his orchestration of *Shenandoah* gives a new twist to a traditional tune. His most successful piece is the title track *Beauty Come Dancing*. The Netherlands Radio Choir and Orchestra give a flawless performance.

SHIRLEY RATCLIFFE

DONIZETTI: MESSA DI REQUIEM

Carmela Remigio (s), Chiara Amarù (m-s), Juan Francisco Gatell (t), Andrea Concetti (b), Omar Montanari (b), Chorus Donizetti Opera, Orchestra Donizetti Opera / Corrado Rovaris (dir)
Dynamic CDS 7813 [69:59]

★★★★



Not publicly performed until 1870, Donizetti's *Messa di Requiem* in D minor was composed in 1835 for the death of Bellini, Donizetti's compatriot and *bel canto* rival. In the Italian religious repertoire of the 19th century, the work

has long been overshadowed by Verdi's *Requiem* and *Four Sacred Pieces*, as well as Rossini's *Stabat Mater*; but this new recording, with a decent quintet of soloists, and a generally fine chorus and orchestra under the direction of Corrado Rovaris, makes strong claims for the work's merits. By turns warm and lyrical, then dramatic and powerful, Rovaris eschews any exaggeration of Donizetti's intentions and simply lets the music speak for itself – and the performance is all the better for it. The applause at the end betrays the fact this is a live recording, though this is not stated in the booklet.

PHILIP REED

IN THE WIDE AWE AND WISDOM (PAUL HALLEY: CHORAL WORKS)

Keramion Singers / Paul Halley (org/dir)
Pelagos Music (2CDs) [47:09; 38:19]

★★★



Born in Romford, the composer, choral conductor and organist Paul Halley is currently director of music of the Cathedral Church of All Saints in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Halley is a skilful organist who writes imaginatively for his instrument. The

16 sacred works on these two discs are all choral commissions. The writing is lyrical and tuneful – and he is adroit at building to a climax – but it does become predictable, and the harmonies are over-sweet for my taste; a touch of acidity would have been welcome. Other instruments are sometimes employed – probably at the request of the commissioner – but the way the French horn is used in *A brighter garden* makes it surplus to requirements. Halley's Keramion Singers are a very accomplished group whose talented sopranos can rise to dizzying heights, but at times they are very strident and dominate the whole group. Halley publishes his own music, and choral directors might find these works worth examining.

SHIRLEY RATCLIFFE

ORGAN MUSIC

CÉSAR FRANCK: COMPLETE WORKS VOL. I: EARLY ORGAN WORKS/FRAGMENTS

Bärenreiter BA9291, £26.00

CECILIA MCDOWALL: O ANTIPHON SEQUENCE

Oxford University Press, £9.75

SERGEI RACHMANINOV: BARCAROLLE (TR. IAIN QUINN)

Ut Orpheus, £12.50

JOHANN RINCK: SAMMLUNG VON VOR- UND NACHSPIELEN FÜR DIE ORGEL

Edition Dohr 11388, £49.50

OXFORD BOOK OF FUNERAL AND MEMORIAL MUSIC FOR ORGAN

Oxford University Press, £13.50

Of the 130-plus pages of Bärenreiter's **Franck** volume, edited by Christiane Strucken-Pauland, only about 50 are occupied by performable complete works (four in total); the rest is taken up with multilingual commentary, facsimiles and fragmentary works. Enterprising Franckians may recognise one or two of the pieces (the *Pièce* in E flat and an early version of the *Fantaisie* in C, maybe): the *Andantino* in G minor and *Pièce* in A will probably be new territory to most players. The music is always interesting for one reason or another (even if not always compositionally – there are a few *longueurs* here and there), and bears many fingerprints of the composer's mature style; but anyone planning a performance will need to take close and careful note of the detailed editorial commentary – many of the performance markings may be unfamiliar to those used to the published works.

Cecilia McDowall's Advent **O Antiphon** sequence was first performed complete as a concert work lasting about 15 minutes in total; but as the composer's informative and helpful note explains, individual movements can be extracted for liturgical use, thereby making the work doubly useful. Textures are varied and thoughtfully crafted, and technical difficulties are not extravagant (although the faster, more minimalist movements will need careful preparation for full effect). Registration suggestions are provided for a two-manual and pedal instrument. The whole piece makes a valuable and atmospheric addition to seasonal repertoire, but there's no reason at all why it shouldn't be played at other times of year as well.

Iain Quinn provides a musicianly and pragmatic transcription of a piano work by **Rachmaninov**. His choice of original is prudent, and the piece feels at home in its new identity as an organ work (he finds resemblances to Dupré's op.7 no.3, which informs his suggested registration scheme). Don't be lulled into a false sense of security by the opening two pages – it gets much trickier.

The most substantial postludes in the **Rinck** collection are about 50 bars long, while the interludes and preludes are far shorter. According to the (brief, and linguistically rather garbled) editorial material, its destined audience was 'less artistic and skilful organists' – an intention reflected in both idiom and level of technical

►

◁ challenge. It will undoubtedly still have its uses today, liturgically and pedagogically, but the price tag seems pretty steep, not least in the absence of any detailed commentary or explanation of the nature and extent of editorial interventions.

OUP's latest collection of occasional music acknowledges changing liturgical fashions (*On Eagle's Wings* gets its own piece, by Robert Gower) but also includes works by Bach, Vierne, Parry, Elgar and Handel. There's some crossover with other OUP collections, but nothing that makes the volume a bad investment. Probably inevitably, the original music is of a somewhat less testing nature technically than the transcriptions (the Schubert Quintet movement is really quite fiddly to manage) but more concerning is the number of misprints – several of the works contain printing errors, with a particularly egregious one creeping into bar 13 of *Nimrod*.

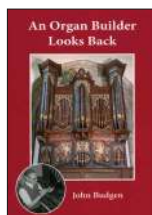
STEPHEN FARR

BOOKS

JOHN BUDGEN: AN ORGAN BUILDER LOOKS BACK

Foreword by the Revd Canon Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite

Ex Libris Press, 100pp incl. 21 photos, p/b, £7.00 (incl. UK p&p; from John Budgen, Woodlands, Sutton End, Crockerton, Warminster, BA12 8BH)



There must be thousands of books about pipe organs. *An Organ Builder Looks Back* is in some ways unlike others of its kind. A certain amount of technical information is included. However, it also deals with day-to-day dusty and draughty organ building and its personalities, at home and abroad, as seen through the eyes of a sensitive, intelligent and highly talented organ builder, whose writing style is amusing, readable and effortless.

The title *An Organ Builder Looks Back* will seem familiar, being an adjustment from Alfred Hollins's autobiography – *A Blind Musician Looks Back*. An ageing literary critic on first reading a few chapters of Hollins's work declared: 'One is captivated.' One can truly say this too of John Budgen's highly colourful and, at times, arresting book. Meet for a moment two celebrated voicers: first, the famed William Cyphes Jones, who 'worked with absolute certainty and assurance. His reeds always had a characteristic flair to them.' Then there was the coarse (though very kindly) Frank Hubbard: 'He was corpulent and profane, bombastic and conceited.' (Well, praise where praise is due, and don't if it isn't.) But possibly the greatest praise and respect is reserved for his teacher at Clifton College, Dr Douglas Fox: 'Well, Budgen, you'll never be anything special, but you might be some use to a village church somewhere.' 'Dead right; I have never been anything special and have been useful to the point of exploitation at village churches.'

John Budgen's successful organ restorations are legion, the most remarkable (among very many others) being Shelland Parish Church's barrel organ with its two 'modern' tunes, specially pinned by Budgen himself; the 17th-century Thomas Thamar organ in Framlingham Parish Church; St Margaret's Lothbury, City of London (George Pike England, 1801); and the Grove organ (Michell & Thynne, 1885) in Tewkesbury Abbey.

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ENCOUNTERS

JO CARPENTER, INDEPENDENT MUSIC PR



I set up Jo Carpenter Music PR Consultancy in 2005, taking the step to go freelance after many years in the music industry. I read music at Christ Church, Oxford, then worked as what would nowadays be called an “intern” with Barry Millington, reviews editor at *BBC Music* magazine. At that stage I considered myself to be following a path to music journalism, and when a job came up at *CD Review*, I got it and went to work there for a year as a sub-editor, by which time I had learned a lot about the industry – to the extent that I realised I wanted to be on the “other side”. The opportunity arose with Polygram – I took a job in marketing,

working on the Philips and Decca labels.

By this time I was sure that my future lay in creating pitches rather than receiving them. People in the business knew that I wanted to move into PR and the opportunity arose with the multi-label distributor Select Music – I joined as press assistant and found myself working on a huge output of recordings: one minute I’d be handling John Rutter’s own label, the next Masaaki Suzuki’s Bach Collegium Japan. I loved the variety of clients and the opportunity to form professional relationships over a long period – the job lasted eight years, the culmination of which was taking on the head of press role with Naxos, which was the heart and soul of Select.

The impetus to go freelance came from the fact that there wasn’t really a bigger job than Naxos anywhere, and many groups and individual artists had their own general PR needs which went beyond the requirements of their CD releases – I received a lot of encouragement from them, and now, after 13 years on my own, I’ve been able to build up a regular client base but also have some scope to take on one-off projects that interest me. Today my regular clients include St John’s Smith Square, the London Festival of Baroque Music, the Tallis Scholars, Somm Recordings, the Brook Street Band and the London Mozart Players, who will be celebrating their 70th birthday in 2019. I have also worked on projects with the composer Sally Beamish and the pianist Clare Hammond; and Norsk Musikforlag A/S connects me with European contemporary composers, so I’m very much across the whole spectrum of music production.

There is no denying the diminution in scale of “old” media, but it’s still there and continues to carry respect: a review in a national newspaper or coverage on Radio 3’s *In Tune* or Radio 4’s *Front Row* raises profile and can have a ripple effect in driving sales of any associated concert or CD.

New media such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram have brought new opportunities. They are definitely tools to use, but the difference between new and old

is that media-savvy artists bring their own hands-on experience and existing digital activity to the table. If artists have large groups of online followers, there are ways to get messages out which didn’t exist before. So a single Tweet with an embedded link can reach thousands of people instantly. I like clients who understand the media: they are realistic, and know there is less space for coverage of classical music; so you can be creative with them, and you can trust them to support themselves in the online world.

This means that the nature of the job has changed. In old-media days I would be stuffing envelopes, licking stamps and sending out press releases. There’s still a place for that, but nowadays I can probably reach all these people instantly with one press of a computer key. The job has changed from the recipients’ point of view too. A journalist will be receiving a lot of EPKs – electronic press kits; they might be writing for several publications while also publishing their own blog. They are time-poor. With electronic communications, they – and I – can work remotely.

Although I’m in London a lot, I’m based in Suffolk and client relationships are calibrated in a different way. It’s unusual now to have a long lunch to get to know someone – online or in-person meetings tend to get straight to the point because everyone has a lot to do. I do occasionally miss the old ways: as in everything, computers haven’t given us more time, they’ve just vastly increased our capacity to work.

People say to me, doesn’t a world where everyone can have an opinion and broadcast it online dilute the very notion of criticism, and the relationship which consumers have with critics whose opinions they’ve maybe learned to trust over time? My answer is that quality will always out. There are bloggers and commentators in the online world whose opinions are trusted and carry weight. The rest is noise and I think music-lovers are capable of sorting out which is which. www.jocarpenter.com

Jo Carpenter was in conversation with Graeme Kay.



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